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BY ALICE B. BROWN.

May 2, 1875.—What a beautiful day this is! The skies are as bright and blue as if no clouds had ever darkened their smiling surface, and the air is full of fragrance and melody. The birds have been having quite a concert in the splendid old maple under my window, and the little songsters warbled so sweetly that I left my writing-desk to watch and listen. This place seems to be indeed a perfect paradise for the little creatures, for throughout the day their joyous notes are heard all over the grounds; their songs always waken me at early dawn, and to one fresh from the city they are a source of real enjoyment.

I have been here nearly two weeks, and already feel that I have improved considerably. Yet in spite of returning health and spirits, I cannot help experiencing feelings of sadness as I recall the days of my early girlhood, and think of the contrast between the past and present. In my beautiful home in the city of Chicago I had every luxury that heart could desire until that terrible time of the great fire. Ah me! shall

I ever forget those piercing screams, the blinding glare and the deafening roar and tumult, that come back to me now like a horrible nightmare? and later still the shock that I experienced when I learned that nearly all our earthly possessions had been swept away?

But this blow was slight in comparison with the death of my father, which occurred soon afterward. Deprived of the love and care of the kindest of parents, and standing as it were alone in the world, who can wonder that the merry girl suddenly developed into the thoughtful woman? How much can be compressed into a few years! how many severe yet wholesome lessons taught by adversity! A short time since I had no reason to doubt the friendship of the many who fluttered around me; now I have learned from bitter experience that the world worships at the shrine of Mammon, and the possessor of a few thousands is no longer the important personage that she once believed herself to be. Yet even in the midst of misfortune I have found a few

whose professions of friendship were sincere, and whose kindness to the orphan girl will never be forgotten. Nor can I ever entirely despond; youth is not apt to yield to despair, and I trust that somewhere in the future the bright hopes of my girlhood will be realized.

At present my condition is certainly far more enviable than that of the family with whom I am now boarding. Like myself, they were impoverished by the great fire; this pretty little cottage, a short distance from the city, and a few thousands safely invested, being all that remained: but they have not learned to look at the bright side of life, and appreciate the blessings that are still theirs; on the contrary, the mother and daughter are the most discontented mortals I ever beheld. Wealth seems to be their idol, and the recovery of that position which they once held in society the sum total of their earthly ambition. Mrs. Ellsworth says she mourns the loss of their fortune not so much for her own sake as that of Grace, who was just "coming out," and expected to have a brilliant season, and make an unlimited number of conquests. Doubtless the destruction of Grace's prospects has not tended to improve her temper, for she is, as her brother Tom expresses it, "just like a crab-apple." Let me describe this young hopeful. He is thirteen, awkward as boys of his age usually are, with a pair of mischief-loving eyes and a finely formed head, in which he says all the brains that should belong to the rest of the family are concentrated, and there is considerable truth in the remark too. As he lost his father when quite small, and Mrs. Ellsworth is totally incapable of bringing up a child in the way he should go, he has grown up wild, wayward, and so impatient of restraint that his mother often predicts he will come to some bad end; a fear that I do not share, for there are germs of great good in the lad's nature. In fact, I am partial to Tom, and am confident that with proper training he would have made a very noble boy—not one of the saintly kind who figure so largely in books for the young, and always manage to die just as we are beginning to think them an intolerable nuisance, but a warm-hearted, right-minded youth, giving promise of bearing his part bravely in the battle of life.

His hatred of deception, and sturdy independence, find such a ready response in my own heart that I cannot but sympathize

with him in his hours of disgrace. These are sometimes undeserved, for if ever a piece of mischief has been done, "that Tom" is sure to be accused as the author of it. It is a pity that the love bestowed upon him by mother and sister is not in proportion to the blame; but our affections are generally bestowed upon those whom we fancy resemble ourselves; and Tom is so unlike his relatives that his share of that blessing is rather small—a fact that he understands and resents.

Yet when with those who can comprehend and appreciate him he is really companionable, and much more careful of the rules of politeness. He has taken quite a fancy to me, and says that as I am "rusticating" for my health, he will keep me supplied with fresh berries and melons during the summer. These will certainly prove a very agreeable addition to my bill of fare, for Mrs. Ellsworth's strenuous efforts to maintain "style" sometimes leave a terrible gnawing at my stomach. Indeed, I believe that her chief reason for boarding me was because she thought that an invalid would not encroach greatly upon her larder, for she gave me to understand that it was not in accordance with her aristocratic ideas to receive boarders. But here I am, thriving in spite of scanty food, for the fresh air and long walks to which I have accustomed myself seem to have given me a new lease of life.

But I must leave you, my journal, for the perfume of roses and carnations floats up so temptingly from the garden that I cannot resist taking a stroll amid my floral beauties.

June 3.—Yesterday, while I was enjoying my walk in the garden, my favorite Tom came down the path, with a bowl of great luscious strawberries. "There, Miss Maggie," he said, as he placed it in my hands; "I have brought you the first berries of the season, and I want you to gobble every one."

"Thank you, Tom," said I, taking a generous mouthful of the delicious fruit. "Where did you get such fine ones?"

"Why, they are some of my own raising," answered Tom, diving his hands into his pockets, and watching the feast with a look of calm enjoyment. "I planted the vines, and keep the bed well weeded, and am boss of that if nothing else. Grace is as fond of 'em as you, but I brought you every nice one I could find, for she's a dreadful vixen,

and just made my ears fairly ring this morning!"

"Why, Tom! have you gotten into trouble again?" I asked.

"Oh, yes! We had a terrible row, but I will tell you just how it happened. You see Grace heard that a rich young gentleman from New York was coming to see us soon—a fellow she and mamma claim as a cousin, although he is no more our relative than yours, Miss Maggie. Well, I think from several sly hints that were dropped that Grace intends to set her cap at him, and marry him if he gives her the chance—which I hope he won't. She seemed so pleased that I asked her if she was so fond of gentlemen's society why she couldn't sometimes be civil to our own cousin Phil, if he *was* a butcher's son. When I said that she grabbed me by the back and boxed my ears, and mamma, instead of taking a fellow's part, just cried out, 'You young rascal! never let me hear the word butcher from you again!' Here Tom mimicked his mother's voice so perfectly that I could not refrain from smiling, in spite of his sad story.

"And," continued the boy, his eyes blazing at the remembrance of his wrongs, "Grace said that when the visitor came I should be kept in the background as much as possible, for she wouldn't have his sense of propriety shocked by my wicked pranks. As if I were a baby to be tied to their apron strings! Oh! how I wish I were a man! It must be jolly to know that you are as big and important as other people, and can open your lips without being snubbed!" And Tom stroked an imaginary mustache.

"I am very sorry to hear such a sad account," I remarked; "but I do hope, Tom, that you will resolve always to do right, no matter what others may say or do."

"But what's the use for a fellow to make good resolves if nobody helps him to keep 'em?" asked he. "Now if my mother and sister were like you, Miss Maggie, it would be easy enough to do right. But you know"—

"Tom! Tom!" called his mother's shrill voice, "come to me immediately." And away he went, leaving my lazy feet following. Mrs. Ellsworth was standing in the door as we entered, and her sharp eyes peered keenly into each face, as if fearing that her son had been making important disclosures; but I do not think she was

rendered any wiser by the scrutiny. At dinner she very graciously informed me that she expected soon to receive a visit from a young gentleman belonging to one of the most wealthy and aristocratic families of New York. "When quite young," she continued, "his father resided a while in Chicago, and as he and Mr. Ellsworth had been old chums during boyhood, our families were always on the most intimate terms. Edgar used to admire Gracie immensely," with a glance at that young lady, who simpered and tried to blush.

I looked at the pretty wax-doll face opposite, and decided that unless my talkative hostess had drawn upon her imagination for facts Mr. Lynton must be a person of very weak mental endowments.

"He is a perfect Adonis, Miss Lennox," lisped Grace. "I know you will lose your heart to him at once."

"I think not," I returned, carelessly. "As far as mere personal attractions are concerned, I believe I am invincible."

"Then you are not such an admirer of beauty as Mr. Lynton," said her mother. "It would be impossible for him to fancy a plain woman!"

I felt that this sweeping assertion included my unlucky self, but as the gentleman was nothing to me I could afford to ignore the slur. That Mrs. Ellsworth was not so sanguine as her words would have seemed to imply was evinced by a conversation that I overheard soon afterward. I was seated on the piazza reading, and as she and Grace were in the room opposite, every word was distinctly audible.

"I am almost sorry," remarked the elder, "that Miss Lennox will be here when Edgar makes his promised visit; it may prove a drawback to your plans, Gracie."

"What, mamma!" and the tone was supremely scornful, "you do not fear that I shall find a rival in that little plain-faced creature, I hope?"

"Not so fast, Grace. I did not say that I feared it, but I insinuated that it might be possible. As to her being plain he might not agree with you there, for it was only yesterday I heard Mr. Stratton say she had one of the most interesting faces he had ever seen."

"Who cares for that idiot's opinion? I tell you that the fact of her being here will not trouble me in the least if she will only have sufficient sense to keep from intrud-

ing, and give me the chance to play my cards well. Millions don't drop every day at a girl's feet, and I am determined to make the most of my opportunity."

"Well, Edgar is certainly a splendid prize, and I hope that you will win," said her mother; and soon afterward the precious pair left the room without discovering my proximity.

I cannot say that this revelation was a very startling one, as I had already had a pretty clear insight into the character of each, but it certainly did disgust me. Pride urged me to leave the house at once, and just as I had reached the decision Tom joined me on the piazza. Looking at his frank, noble face, I could not help wondering if it were possible that the blood of these vulgar people coursed through his own veins.

"Tom," I remarked, as he seated himself boy-fashion on the floor, "I am thinking of leaving you."

How his countenance fell!

"O Miss Maggie! I do hope you were only jesting!" he exclaimed, "for I was just thinking what a jolly time we were going to have this summer. Besides, you know you are the only one who lets a fellow have any peace. What *could* have put such an idea into your head?"

"Something has transpired that makes me think I had better go," I answered; but my resolution was already giving way, for something about the boy just then reminded me of the brother over whose grave the birds had sung and the flowers blossomed for ten summers. "After all," I thought, "I am not a dependant on Mrs. Ellsworth's bounty, and as my stay at best will only be for a few weeks, why should I go if my presence can afford any pleasure to Tom?"

So when I looked up and found his appealing eyes fastened on my face, I answered their look by saying, "Well, then, if you wish it, I will stay." His countenance cleared instantly, and his boyish expressions of gladness almost dissipated my remaining doubts as to the propriety of remaining. But one thing I must remember—that it is essential to Miss Grace's peace of mind that I keep from "intruding."

June 6.—I came in early this morning from a long walk, feeling wonderfully refreshed and invigorated. Bright-hued wild flowers had nodded at me as I passed along; birds trilled their matin songs from every

tree; and everything seemed so full of life and vitality that my heart grew full of hope and peace. I do not believe that the most surly and discontented person can hold communion with nature without being in some degree benefited; and I could not help wishing, after going down to breakfast, that more than one of the household had tried the experiment.

For Grace's brow was puckered in a most unbecoming frown, and her tongue was more active than ever at fault-finding. Tom, of course, came in for his share of blame, his awkwardness especially exciting comment, and once when he trod on her dress she snappishly exclaimed that such great clumsy feet were never seen; a remark that made him examine them minutely with a look of the greatest concern, and gravely ask me if I thought they had grown much since the previous evening. Then the breakfast, which was really well-cooked, she declared "fit for nothing but the pigs," and scolded the servant soundly for inattention to her work.

"Your breakfast would please anybody but grumblers, Bridget," said Tom, glancing at the girl's flushed, worried face, "and your waffles are so nice that I for one intend to make them go like greased lightning." In his hurry to suit the action to the word he gave his cup a slight tilt, spilling about a spoonful of the coffee on Miss Grace's delicate pink muslin, and loosening her tongue at both ends.

Tom, however, bore it with perfect composure, eating his breakfast with greater relish than ever, and when she had finished he turned to me with a comical smile. "The old cat's claws are sharper than ever this morning, Miss Maggie," he said; "but as she has met with a disappointment that has 'kinder sot' her back, as the gardener says, you must excuse her."

"Hush, Tom!" said his mother, sternly; "will you never lay aside your saucy ways?" Then, as Bridget left the room, she turned to me, and remarked, "I must explain what he means by the disappointment, Miss Lennox, and can assure you it is one that I share most fully."

It seems that they had received another letter from the expected "Adonis," informing them that he had found it necessary to postpone his visit for two or three weeks. In the mean time, he wrote, business would call an old and valued friend of his to the

city for a few days, and, as he preferred boarding in the country, he would be glad if they could accommodate him during his stay.

"Of course," said Mrs. Ellsworth, "we shall be pleased to see Major Glenn for Edgar's sake, but we regret that the dear boy will not be with us as soon as we expected." A remark that failed to arouse my sympathy, as I knew their affection for the "dear boy" was not altogether disinterested; but I could readily imagine Grace's disappointment, after planning herself for speedy conquest. Finding the domestic atmosphere too foggy for my sunny mood, directly after breakfast I retired to my own room, where I have spent the morning reading and writing, and at intervals listening to the boisterous songs sung by bright, impulsive Tom, whom no amount of snubbing can crush.

June 15. — The major has been with us three days. We were all seated in the parlor, enjoying that cool, delicious hour between sunset and dusk, when his arrival was announced. As he entered the room I was somewhat surprised to see a rather venerable-looking man, with a very tall figure, a little bent, gray hair, and long, luxuriant whiskers, almost concealing the lower part of his face. He wore goggles and carried a cane. Mrs. Ellsworth flew to meet him, and seized his hand with the affectionate ardor of an old friend; while Grace followed her mother's example; and the two, chattering like magpies, scarcely gave the poor old gentleman an opportunity to breathe.

"I am delighted to see you, Major Glenn!" exclaimed the former. "Cousin Edgar has spoken so highly of you that we feel as if we had known you for years."

The major bowed politely without speaking.

"And now do make yourself perfectly at home!" urged the affable hostess. "I trust you have had a pleasant trip?"

"No, madam, I am not the owner of any ship, and never have been," was the reply.

"He did not understand me," said Mrs. Ellsworth, aside; then, assuming her blandest smile, she continued, "I hope you left Cousin Edgar in the enjoyment of good health and spirits."

"Thank you very much, madam, but I must decline the spirits; intoxicating liquors have not passed my lips for many years."

"You seem a little hard of understanding," said Mrs. Ellsworth, still smiling blandly, and raising her voice considerably higher.

"Much obliged, but I do not need any fanning. Your parlor is delightfully cool," he said.

"Is our dear Cousin Edgar well?" asked Grace, coming to her mother's aid.

"A swell?" No, indeed, young lady; so far from being a swell, he has a perfect aversion to anything of the kind."

Mrs. Ellsworth cast a despairing glance at Tom, who stood with his hands in his pockets behind the major's shoulder, grinning delightedly at the scene.

"Come here," she said, forgetting my presence in her vexation, "and see if you can make this old goose understand. I declare! my nerves are all unstrung. Ask him about Cousin Edgar."

The words, shouted in Tom's lusty young voice, caused a new light to dawn upon the old gentleman's mind.

"Yes, yes," he answered, "I am glad to say that your cousin is in the enjoyment of excellent health." Then patting Tom gently on the head—"You're a fine boy, sir, a very fine boy, and I should think a robust one too, for your voice has quite a hearty ring."

Encouraged by Tom's success, Mrs. Ellsworth again endeavored to make herself heard. "I assure you," she shrieked, "we consider it a great privilege to entertain one of Cousin Edgar's friends."

And this time the old major really understood, for he answered, "You are very kind, madam, but I was a little afraid that my deafness would prove an impediment to sociability."

"Oh, make yourself perfectly easy on that score," was the reply; "your deafness is so very slight that it is not worth mentioning." At which "white lie" Tom turned his face away from his mother, and rolled his eyes up to heaven with a look of pious horror.

Presently I joined in the conversation, and, with Tom aiding occasionally as interpreter, we managed to keep up a pretty brisk chat till tea-time.

"Mamma, where could Cousin Edgar have picked up such an uncouth old creature?" asked Grace, when we were all seated at the table. "Just see him cooling his tea in his saucer, and cramming his

knife down his throat! That surely is not a specimen of society manners."

"You know, Grace, that old people are sometimes rather peculiar in their habits," replied Mrs. Ellsworth; and then she glanced at me, and back again to her daughter, with a look that said as plainly as words could have done, "Mind what you are saying." "I feel assured," she added, "that he is a very worthy man."

"Undoubtedly," said Grace, who felt that she had made a blunder, and was anxious to repair it, "otherwise he would not be Cousin Edgar's friend."

"I hope I may be shot," exclaimed Tom, energetically, "if I a'n't tired of hearing that fellow's name mentioned! I bet he's a perfect humbug, and I know I shall feel like taking him for a pin-cushion every time he comes near me."

Here Tom's mamma interposed with a threat of punishment in case of further impertinence, and, as said punishment meant a curtailment of sweets, and he has a sugar tooth, he was silenced.

After supper we returned to the parlor, where Mrs. Ellsworth and Tom engaged the major in conversation; and Grace, declaring that her lungs were unequal to such exertion, seated herself at the piano.

I seated myself at the window to enjoy the cool night air, and, drawing the curtain around me, was soon in the land of dreams, from which I was recalled by Mrs. Ellsworth's voice.

"Tom, the major wishes to retire, and you must show him to his room. Mercy! how fatiguing he is! It is fortunate that his stay will be only for a few days, for I see that he will be a perfect pest."

"Well, I don't mind exercising my lungs a little for an old gent like that," I heard Tom say; "for may be when I grow old some one will have to do as much for me."

"Is he gone at last?" asked Grace, as the two left the room. "I have banged away till my fingers ache, but not half as badly as my ears, for there has been noise enough since the old plague came to drive us all mad."

"Hush!" said her mother, suddenly aware of my presence. Then coming to my side, she gave me a firm shake, and inquired in a rather alarmed voice if I were dreaming. I assured her that I had taken quite a comfortable nap, and I suppose that my

drowsy eyes satisfied her that I had heard nothing, for she seemed greatly relieved.

While witnessing the system of deception kept up between these two amiable people, I sometimes wonder if that invaluable possession, a conscience, has not been left out in the make-up of each. At the same time I cannot help pitying the poor old man who has been the subject of such ill-natured remarks, and is so sublimely unconscious of the fact. Difficult as it is to maintain a conversation with him, I have been amply repaid for the effort, for his mind is richly stored with knowledge, and his remarks are both entertaining and instructive.

Tom is his sworn champion, and we three "get on so well together," as his mother said, that she and Grace find it convenient to leave us to ourselves a great portion of the time, on the plea of household duties, although I never knew domestic matters to trouble the latter till now. Sometimes I cannot help thinking a little scornfully of how greatly the present state of affairs would be reversed if the guest were considered an eligible match; as it is, no objection can be made to my monopolizing a large share of the old gentleman's time, for even if he possessed those golden attractions (which I do not believe he does) of which Miss Grace fondly dreams, he is too staid and sensible to think of marrying at his age, although that mischievous Tom has actually been trying to make me believe that he is in love with me!

"Why, Miss Maggie," he said, "his eyes follow you wherever you go; and only yesterday when we were speaking of the language of flowers, he said that the lily was typical of you. Now is not that a pretty and poetical speech for an old gentleman to make? It's a great pity he is not thirty years younger."

What a tease Tom is!

June 18.—The major left us this morning. When he told us at the breakfast-table that he had finished the business which called him to the city, and would therefore leave us today, the family were loud in their expressions of regret, all, I felt assured, being empty as air, except Tom's.

"We have enjoyed your visit so much, major," said Mrs. Ellsworth, "and shall feel very lonely without you. If we could only induce you to remain a while longer!"

I looked at the major, thinking that indeed "where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to

be wise" as he answered, "I thank you for the invitation, but really cannot accept it, although the few days that I have spent beneath your roof have been in some respects very pleasant ones."

"I shall not forget you, Miss Maggie," said he, as he bade me farewell, "but shall think very often of your forbearing kindness to a poor, infirm old man. And now if I were to ask you for one of your bonny brown curls as a keepsake, would you think me too unreasonable?"

"Certainly not," I replied, feeling a little amused at the old gentleman's request; and, as Tom brought the scissors with alacrity, in a moment the coveted curl was in his hand.

"What an affecting scene!" sneered Grace, who could not refrain from venting her spleen at this mark of special favor. "It's a pity I am not an artist."

"Sour grapes," quoted Tom.

"My boy," observed the major, turning to that young gentleman, "if you will look in my room when I am gone you will find that I have not forgotten you. And now remember you must take good care of Miss Maggie."

"That I shall, sir," replied Tom, with the gravity of a man of thirty.

Then with a few more parting words and considerable handshaking the major left, bearing with him many loving messages to "Cousin Edgar."

"Such a kind, affable old gentleman!" exclaimed Mrs. Ellsworth, drawing a deep sigh, which I knew must be one of relief, as I ascended the steps, vaguely wondering if I should ever see the old man again. Tom had already scaled the stairs in a manner that might have done honor to the renowned Sam Patch, and was now calling excitedly from the major's room, "Hurry up, Miss Maggie! hurry up!"

"Now isn't that something for a fellow to feel proud of?" he asked, as I entered, pointing to several beautifully bound editions of the works of standard poets.

"It is a very nice present indeed," I assented.

"I guess he gave me these," said Tom, running his eyes delightedly over his treasures, "because he heard me say that I was so fond of poetry. In fact I have an idea of becoming a poet."

"Bravo, Tom!" I cried; "who knows but you are an embryo Shakspeare or Milton

only awaiting an opportunity to dazzle the world with your genius?"

"But I say, isn't he bully?" asked Tom, who in the absence of his mother frequently indulges in slang. "Such a splendid old chap that I did not mind his deafness a bit; but I heard Grace telling mamma this morning that she thanked Heaven her lungs would now have a good rest, although she had been begging the major to stay almost in the same breath. I think deceit is dreadful."

In which opinion I most heartily concur.

July 2. — The long-wished-for Adonis made his appearance a week since, and Grace, who has daily donned her most becoming costumes in honor of his arrival, is radiant with smiles. After a formal introduction at the table, I had ample time for observation, and was certainly most agreeably impressed. Instead of the perfumed, brainless dandy whom I had expected to see, I found a refined and cultivated gentleman, with manners graceful, polished, and perfectly free from affectation. His personal appearance fully justifies Grace's description; his head, formed to delight a phrenologist, is crowned with silky rings of jet-black hair; his eyes, of the same color, are large and brilliant; and his features are the most regular and perfect that I have ever seen. Yet, after all, the greatest charm of his face lies in its noble and intellectual expression.

His conversational powers are very fine, and he has also the happy faculty of adapting himself to each individual. How ridiculous to suppose that such a man could harbor even a fancy for a shallow-brained girl like Grace! but that young lady, whose bump of self-esteem is finely developed, I suppose has never troubled her pretty head with fears of a disappointment.

Remembering the conversation that I had overheard before Mr. Lynton's arrival, for several days I held myself aloof from his society, and had resolved to do so during his stay, but something transpired yesterday to change my resolution. Just before dusk I resolved to "freshen" my dress by the addition of a few flowers; a newly filled vase was close at hand, and from that I made my selection, but not one harmonized with my hair and eyes, or the delicate blue of my dress, and the contrast was so displeasing that I flung them all down in disgust.

I thought of Grace as I had seen her a few moments before in the daintiest and most becoming of white evening costumes, with carnations glowing like fire amid her dark braids, and clusters of the same flowers at throat and waist. Was I really growing envious of that pretty, expressionless face, with the richness of warmth and coloring in which my own was so utterly deficient? I asked. Reason told me no, but as I stood looking at the plain reflection in the glass, for the first time in my life I found myself regretting my want of beauty.

Suddenly I happened to think of some lovely white moss rosebuds that I had seen in the garden that day, and thither I turned my steps. I had gathered the flowers, and was admiring their exquisite beauty, when I heard a slight cough, and looking up saw the tall figure of Mr. Lynton, almost hidden by a mass of flowering honey-suckle. Whether he had seen me at first I could not tell, but the pleasant smile and word of greeting he gave me were not indicative of surprise. I returned his salutation, and was leaving the garden when he detained me.

"Wait a moment, Miss Lennox," he said, with some embarrassment visible in his manner. "Please tell me why you always avoid my presence."

I hesitated, for I could neither give him the true reason nor tell an untruth.

"I am sorry," I replied, with burning cheeks, "if I have seemed unfriendly, for it was certainly not my desire to do so."

"You are evading my question," he said, regaining his composure in proportion as I lost mine. "Pardon me, but I believe you have a motive for shunning my society, and I cannot think that I have given you cause for offence. Believe me, it was not idle curiosity that prompted the question, for I have an earnest desire to be your friend."

Looking into his clear, truthful eyes, I could not doubt his sincerity, and laying aside all reserve, I answered,—

"I do believe you, and will answer you frankly. I have avoided your presence, as you say, not from personal dislike, but because I thought if I did not I should incur the displeasure of others."

A smile broke over his face. "I think I understand you now," he said, "and am glad indeed to know that your coolness did not spring from aversion. And now will you not promise me that you will not se-

clude yourself as hitherto, but join freely in all our amusements without fear of unpleasant consequences? You will gratify me greatly by doing so."

I could not refuse a request so earnestly made, and after begging me for one of my roses to wear in his button-hole, we left the garden and entered the house. Since I am no longer the petted child of wealth, I have learned to value more highly the few whose friendship I gain, and the knowledge that I was really an object of interest to this brilliant and refined man caused my heart to beat quicker with pleasure. Perhaps it was this that sent such a glow to cheek and eyes, for when I had placed a cluster of the buds in my curls, and looked in the glass to see the effect, the face that was so pale but a few moments before seemed almost to rival Grace's in brightness and bloom.

"Why, Miss Maggie, you are as pretty as a pink!" exclaimed Tom, enthusiastically, as I met him in the hall on my way to supper. "Grace can't be compared with you, any way, and I bet you will cut her out."

"Nonsense, Tom!"

"Well, we'll see. By the way, Miss Maggie, I like Mr. Lynton a great deal better than I thought I would."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Tom, and hope you have no desire to stick pins in him now."

"Not a bit. Why, he is as tip-top as the old major!"

"Miss Lennox, I trust that you will favor us with some music this evening," said Mr. Lynton, courteously, as we were leaving the table. "Your young friend Tom has been telling me that you warble like a canary."

I assented, and at the close of the first song he complimented me very highly yet delicately upon my musical abilities. Another song was immediately called for, and then a duet, in which I discovered that he possesses a voice of surpassing power and richness.

"Why, Cousin Edgar, I had no idea that you were so fond of music!" said Grace, veiling her jealousy under the greatest suavity of manner. "I am sure I thought yesterday that your remarks about the fashionable songs of the day were very severe."

"You misunderstood me," was the reply. "I am passionately fond of music, especially the brilliant productions of the old masters. My remarks only referred to those

light sentimental songs, without either sense or poetry, which I do not believe any person of cultivated tastes would tolerate. Those which we have just sung are, as you have said, among the popular songs of the day, but they are perfectly free from sickly sentimentalism, and Miss Lennox sings with such exquisite feeling that her voice gives an added charm to the words, and inspires the listener."

Grace was silent, but luckily for the speaker's equanimity he did not see the glance she darted at me, for if looks could kill I should have died on the spot.

But I must stop scribbling, and give my fingers an opportunity to rest, for it is growing late, and I have promised to give Mr. Lynton a "musical treat," as he called it, each evening during his stay.

July 18.—Two weeks since I penned a line in my journal, and during that time how much has transpired that I had not expected to record! I can hardly realize that my acquaintance with Mr. Lynton is of such recent date; and yet those days brought such peace, such contentment, into my hitherto lonely life that their flight was almost unheeded. I did not seek to investigate the cause; I only knew there was a well-spring of joy in my breast that lent a halo to my surroundings, and rendered me more lenient to the occasional coldness of Mrs. Ellsworth and her daughter.

This coldness I knew sprung from the fact that "Cousin Edgar," instead of devoting himself entirely to Grace, paid me too many of those little attentions which that young lady considered her exclusive right. In the mean time the two labored most industriously to secure the "splendid prize," without, as it seems, exacting the knowledge that "Barkis was willin'!" That he had long since divined their motives I had no doubt, but I did not know that he understood their characters so thoroughly until yesterday.

"What do you think, Miss Lennox?" said Grace, as I entered the room where she and Mr. Lynton were seated; "Cousin Edgar pretends that he can read one's character and destiny."

"Well, suppose we put his skill to the test," I replied; and Grace, clapping her hands like a wild school-girl, cried out in glee,—

"Oh, that will be capital!"

"Excuse me, ladies," said Mr. Lynton;

"I have some conscientious scruples about fortune-telling."

But Grace declared that she would take no denial, and after a moment's hesitation he consented, saying that he would not hold himself responsible if he said anything to offend.

"As if you *could* do such a thing!" exclaimed Grace, reproachfully.

"Very well; please let me see your hand, Miss Lennox."

I obeyed, trembling as if I had been in the presence of a veritable soothsayer, and what he said only increased my agitation.

"You are proud, sensitive, and of sanguine temperament, with a strong love of truth, and a perfect hatred of deception. Possessing great capacity for loving, you were not made for the gayety and glitter of the world, but the more quiet and enduring pleasures of the domestic circle. Your future life will be far rosier than the present, and gilded by love as deep and lasting as ever fell to the lot of woman."

"A very nice destiny indeed," lisped Grace, sweetly. "But to tell the truth, Cousin Edgar, I never thought Miss Maggie's disposition was that which you have described, though perhaps I am not a competent judge."

"Doubtless," remarked Mr. Lynton, coloring slightly. "Now let us see what the Fates have in store for you," as Grace extended her hand coquettishly.

"Nature has dowered you with beauty,"—the silly girl glanced triumphantly at me—"but you have dedicated it to selfish purposes." An angry blush usurped the place of the smile. "You are proud and ambitious, but I can predict for your dreams of future grandeur nothing but disappointment."

"You are perfectly insulting!" exclaimed Grace, as she jerked her hand spitefully away, and swept angrily from the room.

"She will never forgive you," I remarked, as he watched her retreating figure, with a scornful, amused smile wreathing his lips.

"Well, I think I can survive the shock," he replied, coolly. "I had not intended to be so severe, but that covert thrust at you was more than I could endure. How sad, and, at the same time, disgusting, to see one so utterly lost to truth and goodness! Margarite! you were rightly named, for your soul is as pure and transparent as a pearl, and"—

The sentence remained unfinished, for just then Tom came in with a bit of news for Mr. Lynton, and while they were discussing it I retired to my own room, inwardly wishing that my young friend had not interrupted us just at that moment, for something in Mr. Lynton's look and manner caused a glad, sweet hope to dawn in my heart.

Feeling too restless to remain in-doors, I took one of Tom's treasured volumes that the major had given him, and sauntered forth for my favorite walk. It was one of the most beautiful and picturesque of spots, shaded by lofty beeches, with a carpet of the brightest moss, and clear, limpid stream winding away like a silver thread in the distance. Under one of the trees Tom had formed a sort of rude seat, which he declared was my special property, and which I never failed to monopolize when there. Here I had passed many pleasant hours reading, but this afternoon I found it impossible to confine my attention to my book, so I laid the volume aside.

Some delicate blue flowers growing near the water's edge, attracted my eye, and I gathered a cluster and fastened them at my belt; but as I stood on the bank that was wet and slippery from recent rains, I lost my footing, and slid downward. Fortunately I managed to catch hold of a shrub that overhung the stream, and with some difficulty regained the bank, congratulating myself upon my narrow escape, for though the water was shallow, a plunge into it would have been anything but desirable. As it was, my general appearance was much the worse for the accident, and I was eying my soiled garments with feelings of mingled mirth and vexation when a well-known figure appeared in sight. It was Mr. Lynton, and his surprise at seeing me in such a plight can be better imagined than described.

"My adventure lacks the interest of fiction," I observed, after I had answered his anxious inquiries. "According to the most approved style of modern writers, my hero should have appeared on the scene just in time to rescue me from a watery grave."

"And the sequel of course would be a wedding. But come, take a peep at yourself in the stream, and tell me if you think you resemble the heroines of romance."

I did not wonder at the mischief shining in his eyes when I saw the foreign-looking

figure reflected in the water; my hair had been blown into a mass of tangles, and my face was daubed with patches of black mud, while my pretty little hat was decorated in the same way.

"At any rate I am in no danger of sharing the fate of Narcissus," I returned, with something between a laugh and a sigh, as I flung my hat on the grass and proceeded to wash away the mud. While this operation was being performed Mr. Lynton strolled toward the seat under the beech, where I joined him when I had smoothed my curls into something like order. I found him brushing industriously away at my hat, but, alas! that once becoming little ornament, with its delicate ribbons and flowers, was a perfect wreck.

"O rare, pale Margaret,
What lit your eyes with tearful power,
Like moonlight on a falling shower?"

quoted my companion, after a moment's silence.

"Only the problem as to how long my very modest little fortune would last if I should meet with such an adventure every day," I answered.

"What a matter-of-fact person you are! I was just pluming my wings for a loftier flight into the regions of fancy, and there is no telling to what sublime heights I might have soared had it not been for that unlucky remark of yours."

"Well, I am very sorry if I have destroyed your inspiration; but since you have descended to the level of common mortals, please hand me the book that you just now knocked off the seat."

"Excuse my awkwardness; I should have been more careful had I known that you prized this volume so highly," as I brushed away invisible particles of dust.

"It is Tom's property, and the gift of his friend the major," I remarked.

He gazed at me keenly a moment, then his eyes flashed with merriment, and he broke into the gayest peal of laughter I had ever heard from his lips.

"Did you not find the old gentleman's eccentricities rather amusing?" he asked.

"I found him rather peculiar in some respects," I replied, "but not enough so to excite one's mirth."

"If I were to tell you," his manner changing suddenly from gay to grave, "that no such person as Major Glenn existed—in

other words, that he and I were the same person—would you not believe me?"

"It is impossible!" I cried, feeling myself growing red and white by turns.

"But see, this is a proof." And drawing from his pocket a small parcel, he displayed to my astonished gaze the very curl that I gave Major Glenn on the morning of his departure.

I stood dumb with amazement; had my life depended on my speaking a single word I do not think I could have done it.

"I see you are at a loss to understand my conduct," he continued, "but perhaps when you have heard my explanation you will be inclined to think more kindly of me. You are not acquainted with the circumstances of my early life, so I will relate them as briefly as possible. My parents possessed only a moderate competence, but they made every endeavor to give me all the advantages afforded the sons of wealthy people, and I repaid their efforts by untiring devotion to my studies. Before they died I had the pleasure of seeing them, through my own exertions, surrounded by many luxuries to which they had once been strangers; and my small capital increased steadily, until, a few months since, the death of a relative left me heir to an immense fortune.

"My father and Mr. Ellsworth had been life-long friends, but as no intercourse had been kept up between their families since the deaths of the two men, I was somewhat surprised to receive a letter from Mrs. Ellsworth and Grace, urging me in the most cordial and affectionate terms to pay them a visit. Without taking time to consider, I accepted the invitation, but my reply was scarcely mailed before I regretted having done so. When one has been raised from comparative poverty to affluence he sees, by the homage of many who once refused to recognize him, that gold is a sovereign power, and my brief experience had not strengthened my faith in human nature. I had now no doubt that rumors of my wealth had reached the Ellsworths, and on re-reading their letter I fancied that I detected a tone of insincerity running through it. At any rate I determined to test their truth, so I wrote again, and you know to what effect. A whimsical plan had entered my head, and, as I had always been called a pretty good mimic, I had no fears of the result, so I made my *debut* as Major Glenn.

It is hardly necessary to say that I had feigned deafness in order to understand more thoroughly the characters of my amiable hostess and her daughter; and my experiment proved so successful that sometimes I could hardly hide my disgust. Maggie, you seemed like an angel among those crafty, false-hearted women, and had it not been for you I should never have returned. The gentleness exercised toward one whom you believed to be aged and helpless completely won my heart, and time has but increased my affection."

But what else he said I shall not tell even to you, dear old journal; suffice it to say they were words that filled my soul with sweetest happiness, and amply compensated for those years of loneliness. His confession opened my eyes to the fact that my love for him had become perfect idolatry, but I felt that he had guessed my secret before I had known it myself.

"I do not regret my stratagem," he remarked, as we walked homeward, "for had it not been for that I might never have discovered your goodness and purity of heart. After my exit as Major Glenn there was not an hour in which you did not play a prominent part in my thoughts; and when I saw how you avoided me on my return I was pained more than you can imagine, although I might have felt confident that those unworthy Ellsworths were the cause of it. How often, when I have seen them treat you with coldness, have I wished that I had the right to protect you from insult! And now it has been granted me, I desire to make our engagement immediately known. It is the only revenge I ask, and in consideration of all their kindness to you and the 'major,' as well as their modest designs on my fortune, I think it is one that I am entitled to."

"When they are apprised of our engagement my presence will be tolerated no longer," I said, "so I shall return to my old home in the city as soon as possible."

"And I shall not tarry an hour longer, for when my bird has flown there will be nothing to induce me to remain."

So it was settled that he should accompany me to my friends in the city the next day, and then return to New York until the necessary preparations for our marriage were completed.

No words of mine can paint the various emotions depicted in the countenances of

Mrs. Ellsworth and Grace when Mr. Lynton that evening formally announced our engagement; disappointment, rage, and astonishment rendered them both speechless for several moments. Mrs. Ellsworth, however, was the first to recover herself, and then she proffered her congratulations in a very cold and constrained manner; a feat in which she was excelled by Grace, whose malice I suppose I should have forgiven, since it certainly must have been very humiliating to be eclipsed by such a "little plain-faced thing." Tom's expressions of pleasure were most hearty and characteristic, and he declared that it was "just what he had expected."

Grace found opportunity during the evening to give vent to a little of the venom brewing within her. "Permit me," she whispered, with a malicious smile, "to congratulate you upon your skill in fortune-hunting."

"Thank you," I replied; "if my arts have triumphed where those of another have been so constantly employed, I certainly have cause to pride myself upon the fact." A remark that sent the angry blood to her face, and one that I immediately regretted, for such petty spite was not worthy of notice.

It is hardly necessary to say that when we expressed our intention of leaving the next day we did not receive any very pressing invitations to remain; Mr. Lynton, as the destroyer of so many brilliant hopes, was no longer a very desirable guest; and as for myself I could readily imagine that I was a perfect eye-sore. Tom alone seemed truly grieved at parting with us, but the assurance that we would write often seemed to console him somewhat.

So here I am back in my old room; but oh! since I left it such a happy change has swept over my life that I can hardly realize it. Edgar left me this morning, but in a month he will return and take me to New York, where he says I will find "a handsome and luxurious home for the beautiful bride that will grace it." The fact that he considers me lovely is, I think, a proof of his devotion; and it is the knowledge that I possess the love of such a man, and not the thought of the splendor which awaits me, that fills my heart with such supreme contentment. I do not care to regain my old place in society, having learned that there is but little to be gained by such a position. My sole desire is to bless and brighten the life of one who more than realizes my girlhood's dreams.

A STRANGE MISTAKE.

BY LOUISE DUPEE.

Mr. Jones was a handsome and rather distinguished looking gentleman, with the olive skin of a foreigner, fine, dark eyes, and a head of antique mould. Nobody knew anything of him, only that he was a bachelor, and that he came from Boston, but it was evident that he was a man of means. With the exception of invalid gentlemen with weak chests who had fled from New England to escape the cold weather, there was little of the masculine element at the hotel in St. Augustine, and, as a matter of course, plaintively few opportunities for flirting; so the ladies, of whom there were not few, were all particularly eager for his attention; and indeed it is likely that they would have been so had it been otherwise, for his manners were very pleasing, and he seemed a true gentleman.

Miss Maxfield was sitting alone in the parlor one morning, all the party with the exception of herself and Mr. Jones—who had gone out on a little expedition by himself—having gone to the old Spanish fort. It was warm and balmy as summer, though early in February. Invalids and all were spending the day out-of-doors, but Miss Maxfield was afflicted with a slight headache, and chose to remain at home alone and dispose of her time as best she might. She seated herself listlessly at the piano, idly looking over a book of songs which she had brought from her room, now and then singing a few chords, then sustaining the air with her fingers alone. When Mr. Jones came in, after the lapse of an hour or so, she was just commencing a bar of that sweetest of all songs, Beethoven's "Adelaide." He walked straight to her side, and asked to be allowed to turn over the leaves.

She rose rather haughtily, saying that she was tired of singing. She had only been trying to forget her headache by absorbing herself with something else; for though all the other ladies in the house were on quite familiar terms with Mr. Jones, she had scarcely exchanged one word with him as yet, and she was not eager to accept any advances now. She was naturally reserved with strangers, and then he had not sought her. He had seemed more than indifferent

to her charms, and she did not care to win him over to her side. Still, if she chose, Miss Maxfield was the belle of almost any assembly, though she was not strikingly handsome.

"Pray go on. I haven't heard any music since I came here, and you can't imagine how much pleasure it would give me to hear you sing," he said, in a tone of almost boyish eagerness. "This is the song of songs, too. It is like nothing else in the world."

And though Miss Maxfield had always declared that she would never sing to any one but her friends, something in his tone persuaded her in spite of herself, and she commenced the song without further hesitation. She always sang well. Her voice, though not very powerful, possessed some subtle quality which acted like a spell on her listeners; and now she sang with a passionate fervor which was almost a surprise to herself. By the time she got to the evening winds, he was wondering how he ever could have thought her cold or plain; and by the time she got to the fluting of the nightingales, he had taken a leap in love which was as irrevocable as it was sudden. When she had finished, neither of them spoke for some time. The silence seemed not only filled with the evening winds and the murmuring of the waters, the fluting of the nightingales, but some deeper voice which Miss Maxfield did not understand. It embarrassed her. Then he thanked her in a low, half-whispered tone, and after a while they fell to singing duets, their voices blending with the greatest harmony. His, a powerful tenor, was finely cultivated, and he used it with fine effect. So the time passed on, and the excursionists appeared before they had any idea but that it was still morning; and Miss Maxfield was quite aghast to find herself still in her morning attire.

"How people do change their minds!" remarked Belle Sinclair, the most energetic little flirt who ever brought a delicate throat to St. Augustine, taking a view of the situation. She had appropriated Mr. Jones, and wasn't sorry that Kate Maxfield didn't like him.

Miss Maxfield colored, and repaired to her own room at once; Mr. Jones was absent-minded for the rest of the day; and the young ladies of the party, Miss Maxfield's friends, in a little consultation on the state of affairs in general, came to the conclusion that there was something in it, and Mr. Jones and she had both managed to remain at home for the sake of enjoying each other's society.

After this, for one whole week, Mr. Jones devoted himself assiduously to Miss Maxfield. Miss Maxfield accepted his devotion, and seemed happy. Belle Sinclair had picked up an officer with a sentimental glance and the most fascinating uniform imaginable, and did not sigh for the irrevocable past.

It was certain to be an engagement as far as the former couple were concerned, so every one said; and was there ever time or scene more favorable to love-making? The days were perfection, steeped in "golden languors," perfumed with jasmine and sea-breezes; and the nights, which the moonlight seemed to warm like sunshine, were lovely as a dream. They sailed together up and down the Matanzas, walked on the sea-wall, lingered about the old ruins, spent blissful hours in the Rose Garden, got lost in the Pine Barrens, sang duets, and occupied a cosy corner in the little overhanging balcony after the most lover-like fashion. There was no one to interfere with the course of love's young dream. The only one who had any right to do so—Kate's aunt and chaperone—being a weak, fashionable little woman who thought her niece superior to herself in all sorts of worldly wisdom, and would not give herself the trouble to reflect that Mr. Jones was a person of whom nothing was known, that he had never once mentioned his family or friends or occupation, if he had one. The other ladies remembered this vividly, however, as soon as he commenced to admire Miss Maxfield exclusively, and Belle Sinclair was amazed that Kate should dare to flirt so with a perfect stranger whose reserve concerning his own affairs was certainly suspicious.

Something of this may have reached Kate's ears, but it did not interrupt the happy state of things which existed between them, though she grew to look rather thoughtful for a few moments at a time, and whenever she sat down to the piano glided into Chopin's B Minor Sonata, which

was a sign that the depths of her heart were being stirred in some way.

But one bright morning, just as they were preparing for a stroll down by the North River, Mr. Jones received a telegram which demanded his speedy return to Boston, and without being able to spare time for one more interview under the orange-trees, or even to say good-by in a very impressive manner, he hurried away, for it happened to be just as the mule train was preparing to start. He *did* manage to ask Kate if he might write to her, and expressed a desire that he might see her very soon, adding in a low tone something to the effect that existence would be flat, dry, stale, and unprofitable without her presence. She blushed in a decidedly encouraging manner at this, and allowed her hand to remain in his longer than was consistent with prudence, considering that everybody was looking on. Then at the last moment he gave her his card, which bore his business address, so that if they reached Boston on their way home sooner than they had expected to, she might send a note to him informing him of their arrival. They intended to leave Florida the next week, but it was entirely uncertain as yet what route they might take, or how long they might linger on the way.

She took the card, but did not think to glance at it until some time after he had left her. She had trusted him entirely, and not being a very worldly-minded young woman, at least not now with this new dream absorbing her life, it mattered little to her what might be the worldly position of her lover. She felt perfectly assured in her own mind that he was thoroughly noble and worthy of all regard. But when she did at last remember to bring the card to light from the depths of her pocket and read what was engraved thereon, she grew dizzy and blind, and for the first time in her life came near fainting. This is what it was:—

GEORGE JONES,

ARTIST IN HAIR,

10 Blank Street, Boston.

Whiskers or mustache dyed to a beautiful brown or black in five minutes by Snell's Instantaneous Dye.

"What is the matter, Kate, dear?" questioned her aunt, hastening to her side.
"You look ill."

"Nothing much, only a little headache," answered Kate, but looking very wretched indeed in spite of herself. "The air indoors seems close. I am going for a walk."

Before she reached the outer door three beaming, convalescent gentlemen in succession had begged to be allowed to become her escort, but she declined their politeness almost rudely, and hurried away, scarcely heeding whither she went. To be alone and try to think for a few moments was all she desired. How could she have been so deceived? Wasn't there some absurd mistake at the bottom of it all? Wasn't she dreaming? Was it possible that an accomplished gentleman who spoke several languages with perfection, and quoted Carlyle, and sang like a professional, and was acknowledged to have the best manners imaginable—not the finest, mock gentlemen may have fine manners—could stoop to pursue the calling of a barber, or an artist in hair, as he announced himself on his card? Then he was so thoroughly informed on all matters of church and state, expressed himself so nobly, and was so well versed in everything which pertained to good society. And then again would it be likely that a barber would ever attain wealth? for, as Mrs. Vanderpool, the stylish New York lady at the hotel, who was a connoisseur in such things, declared, the diamonds which Mr. Jones wore one evening in his shirt-front were priceless. He was usually faultless in his attire, though very plain, and had never adorned himself with jewelry with the exception of this one occasion. She could not believe that he was in very truth a common barber. Then she remembered how many stories she had heard of such persons palming themselves off as counts, distinguished foreigners of every description, and with success, too; and how the falseness of the world as taught by elderly and experienced people, as well as the prayer-book, had been impressed upon her mind more than once of late. It seemed impossible, but such wonderful things were happening every day; she herself had seen so much deceit, the scenes of life were growing to be so much like those of a sensational novel, that nothing would surprise her hereafter any more than her aunt was surprised when some bright and shining light in the church, the patron saint of all charity and virtue, stole the church funds and left for parts unknown. She was "sick

of life and love and all things." Fashionable society she had only known for a year. Before that time she had been sheltered within the walls of a convent school, and she was heartily tired of it so soon. She tore that unfortunate card into the most minute fragments, and then dropped it piece by piece into the river. She would keep her own counsel; not even her aunt should know how she had been deceived. But what if Belle Sinclair, who visited in Boston, should ever find it out? Then she would spread the delicious tale among her friends, and what an object of ridicule she would become! It was too much. Still, as Kate acknowledged to herself afterward, with a great sob rising in her throat, she did care for him, whatever he might be. It was too late to help that now. She could never even think of any one else in the light of a lover, never.

Then sometimes for a moment she would flatter herself against all reason that there was some cruel mistake in the affair. Was his name George? He had never told her that it was so, but she remembered to have seen G. Jones marked in great black letters on his trunk just before he left St. Augustine. How did he think she would receive this revelation? Could he have imagined for one moment that in her foolish fondness for him—he must have known that she cared for him—she would overlook all and lift him up in the world by her fortune? or did he only make it as a sarcastic reminder of her imprudence and folly?

She went home looking as if the fresh air had not benefited her much, and was rallied concerning her downcast appearance. The elderly ladies regarded her with the eye of sentiment, remembering perhaps some parting in their own experience of love's young dream. Belle Sinclair tossed her head, and looked suspiciously knowing. Her aunt was sure that she was going to be ill, and produced a medicine chest, insisting on some dreadful dose which was a sure preventive of fever and ague.

Three or four days afterward, while she was packing her trunk to leave the sunny South, a letter came to her directed in a strange hand. She broke the seal, and found that it was dated at New York, and signed G. L. Jones. He had written to her on his way home, not being able to wait until he reached there to make a declaration of his love for her, and to ask her to be-

come his wife. It was a manly and straightforward but rather hasty letter, and Kate read it with feelings too deep for words.

"Is your letter from Mr. Jones?" asked her aunt, after she had read it several times over, and finally, tearing it into little bits, committed it to the waste-paper basket.

"Yes, aunt," she replied, coolly.

"Did he offer himself, dear?"

"Yes, he asked me to marry him," she replied.

"And what shall you say? You know, Kate, we know nothing of him as yet, and though he is a perfect gentleman in his manners, and all that"—

"I shall say no, aunt; and please don't talk about it. I can't bear that now," interrupted Kate, with warmth. And after that she heard nothing more on the subject from her easy and good-natured relative.

She considered a while as to whether she should make any reply whatever to this remarkable letter, but at last decided that it was best to do so, as he might be led to believe by her silence that she had never received it, and favor her with more epistles, or even visit her at her own home, which would be decidedly embarrassing. So she wrote to him as any indifferent lady might write to any presumptuous gentleman, assuring him coolly that she could never think of accepting his proposal, and it was not desirable by any means that they should ever meet again. This done she found life grow more gray and gloomy than ever, and tried in vain to keep up even a semblance of her old gay spirits. When she reached New York her friends remarked that the climate of Florida must have disagreed with her, she looked so pale and worn, though she persisted that she was quite well, only wearied by her long journey.

A year passed away, and she had heard nothing more from Mr. Jones. She had no friends in Boston; she never visited that city. Belle Sinclair and Mrs. Vanderpool had gone abroad, and her aunt seemed to have forgotten that such a person had ever existed. It was July, and, accompanied by a party of friends, she was spending the summer at the White Mountains. One morning, on returning from a fern-gathering expedition in the pretty woods of Bethlehem, she found them discussing new arrivals in the hotel parlor. Mrs. Winthrop, a gay and elegant Boston dame, was the chief spokeswoman. Her audience, a party of

stylish young ladies, seemed intensely interested.

"If Mr. Jones has a common name, he belongs to a very old and distinguished family on his mother's side, at least; and then, girls, to say nothing of the nobility of his character, he has great wealth; and though he is still very young, is remarkably brilliant in his profession. You must be as fascinating as possible, though I am afraid it will be all in vain, for he confided to me one day last winter when I rallied him on his coldness and indifference to the sex, that he hadn't much faith in young ladies. Perhaps he met with some unhappy experience, for he used to be all gallantry, and this change came over the spirit of his dream very suddenly."

"I just caught a glimpse of him, as he came across the piazza, and he is so handsome!" said one of the young ladies, enthusiastically. "And the other, the blonde young gentleman, is he so cruelly cold to the fair, also?"

"Oh, no, indeed! He's quite a flirt, though a very fine young gentleman. He is the son of one of our Massachusetts Congressmen, but he has his way to make in the world."

"And Mr. Jones (plebeian name), in spite of his magnificence, is"—began another of the young ladies, but a step was heard on the stairs, and she was hushed with uplifted fingers and scared looks.

Miss Maxfield had the pleasure of seeing the Mr. Jones of her Florida experience pass through the hall and out on to the piazza.

At dinner, as fate would have it, he was placed opposite her at the table, and here for the first time they met face to face. He was already seated when she entered the dining-room, and as he glanced up and recognized her he gave a slight start, and a quick flush mounted to his temples for an instant, but he bowed with the utmost coolness, and hoped in tones of distant politeness that Miss Maxfield had been quite well since he had last seen her at St. Augustine.

Miss Maxfield was not yet so much of a society young lady that she was able to control her features perfectly, and look as if nothing at all was the matter when her feelings were deeply stirred. Her eyes were the frankest, most honest eyes in the world, and all unconsciously they revealed the

trouble in her heart, and wore a sort of beseeching look withal when they met his own. His glance softened perceptibly, though his manner was sufficiently icy, and he devoted himself to Mrs. Winthrop, who sat by his side. Mr. Ingalls, his friend, who had been introduced to Kate before dinner, seemed to be decidedly impressed with the charms of that young lady, and directed nearly all his conversation to her, greatly to her embarrassment, for she was not in a mood for talking, and was so absent-minded that her replies were anything but to the point.

Days passed. There were drives, mountain excursions, picnic parties, moonlight promenades, parlor entertainments on stormy evenings, and Kate, who had been quite intimate with bright, entertaining Mrs. Winthrop, was naturally thrown a great deal into Mr. Jones's society. But neither by word nor look did he reveal the faintest recollection of his old attachment for her. He was always polite, but seemed quite content to allow Mr. Ingalls to monopolize her smiles, and evidently preferred the companionship of any of the other ladies.

"He has forgotten so soon," she thought, bitterly, "and perhaps it is all for the best that I made that absurd mistake. And how could that have happened? Did he give me that barber's card on purpose as a test of my affection? But no, that would have been too ridiculous. It was only a strange mistake. He was in great haste, and pulled that card from his pocket instead of his own. Singular that it should have borne his name, though!"

Such lover's mistakes, such separations and misunderstandings, unhappily do not always, indeed do not often, end as happily as fairy stories, but I am glad to say that this one was planned by a more happy fate than such affairs usually are, and it was not long before the cloud was lifted. Kate, out walking alone, got caught in a thunder-shower. Mr. Jones, who had observed her from the hotel, and who happened to be the only gentleman in the house at the time, went gallantly to her rescue, as he would have done had it been any of the other

ladies. She had sought refuge in a little shanty in the edge of the woods which was used by woodcutters in the winter, and there he found her, pale with fright, and with eyes which welcomed him not only with relief and gladness, but with another expression in their blue depths—an expression which melted all his icy reserve in an instant, and caused his heart to beat with a quicker motion. Kate, though not a particularly nervous and by no means a weak woman, possessed this one weakness to a great degree, the fear of thunder, and as it came crashing and rolling through the great trees overhead, she involuntarily clung to him for protection. He placed his arm around her, for she trembled violently, and in this position they remained in silence until the violence of the storm abated. Then she remembered herself, and with crimson cheek endeavored to disengage herself from his embrace.

"Kate," said he, still holding her fast, "why did you write me such a cruel letter? You surely could not have meant what you said."

Then with a disposition to sob which interfered somewhat with the sense of her speech, she told him the whole wretched story—of the card he gave her as his own, her struggles and wretchedness, her sincere repentance, everything there was to tell.

He laughed with boyish heartiness.

"I have a way of taking every card which is offered me in the street, and my pockets are always filled with them; but I had no idea that I was treasuring up one of a Boston 'Artist in Hair' in my card-case. I feel anything but flattered, however, that you could have believed me to be a gentleman of that calling, though circumstantial evidence was so much against me."

Kate soon satisfied him on this point, however, and they went home two of the happiest people under the summer sun.

"It was fate that sent me to Bethlehem," said she. "Aunt Margaret went to North Conway alone, and it was all I could do to persuade my cousins to accompany me here. Now I know why I had such a longing for the place."

ADELAIDE'S HUSBAND.

BY FLORENCE EDWIN.

"Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh! give me back my heart!
But since that has left my breast,
Take it, love, with all the rest.
Hear my vow before I go,
Hear my vow before I go,
My life! my light! I love thee!
My dearest life, I love thee!
Hear my vow before I go!
My life, I'll love but thee!"

Maurice Ingalls sang the impassioned love-song divinely, and gazed upon the fair face lying on his shoulder with all a lover's ardor and devotion. She—Katharine Chaucer—acted the maid's part to perfection, for they were not two passionate lovers, but acting out this bit of romance for the benefit of the rest. If the pretence savored a little of the real, what then? Maurice enjoyed it all the more perhaps that he saw the men consumed with jealousy and the women so many cats, giving a scratch under the velvety paw of praise.

Mr. Forbes alone uttered no word of blame or praise. He stood leaning idly against the open door, his handsome face stern and gloomy, his keen blue eyes furtively scanning Adelaide's face. He found no open book. "She would die and make no sign," was his mental verdict. Adelaide felt his eyes upon her, and exerted herself to join in the gay badinage and laughter about her.

"How nice it is that you're not jealous, Mrs. Ingalls," Katharine said. "Some wives would have made a horrible fuss at this bit of folly."

"I suppose some wives would," Adelaide returned, carelessly; "but you see I'm not one of that sort. Maurice and I never interfere with each other. When you are married, if you want to keep peace in the house, follow that rule. Come, Mr. Forbes, don't stand there looking so dreadfully owlish. I promised to show you the phosphorus in the water, and this is as good opportunity as any. Will you come, too, Hessie? I believe you have never seen it."

Hessie, who was sitting apart from the rest, her hands crossed in her lap, rose up and joined Adelaide.

An almost imperceptible frown flitted

across Mr. Forbes's face. It chanced that Katharine saw it, and she cried out, mischievously,

"Mr. Forbes isn't anxious for you to go, Hessie. He'd rather look at the phosphorus *a la tete a tete*."

A wave of color swept over Hessie's face, and she stood irresolute. Though Katharine had spoken the truth, all Forbes's chivalry was roused at the awkward position Hessie was placed in by the thoughtless words. Angry, too, that she had read him aright, he spoke one word for Hessie and two for himself.

"Pon my word, Miss Rothsay, 'tis Katharine's own evil mind that prompts such an unworthy suspicion. I know her of old. She is furious because I did not overwhelm her with compliments for the 'Maid-of-Athens' performance. But I suppose I ought to feel flattered that she can bestow any attention upon me, when I know how fascinating such a flirtation as she and Ingalls are engaged in is to her. You see, Mrs. Ingalls, it's all done to irritate you."

"If that is the case, I'm sorry she wastes so much time. Confess that you're a trifle jealous not to be in Mr. Ingalls's place." Adelaide added the latter sentence in a lower tone, audible only to him and Hessie.

"Jealous!" he returned, with cold disdain. "I assure you I have no desire to be a reservoir for caresses that would go to seed else." And, looking straight in Katharine's eyes as he flung this parting shot, he drew Adelaide's and Hessie's arm within his own, and sauntered on humming a bar from an opera.

"I'll pay you for that speech yet," Katharine mentally resolved. Aloud she said,

"What a bear he is, to be sure! That was a hit at all of you, girls, as well as at me."

"Except me, if you please," Bess—Maurice's sister-in-law—put in. "I'm not sorry for any of you. The way you all go on with Maurice is perfectly outrageous. Just as if there were no single men round to flirt with! And there isn't one of you that wouldn't haul a husband over the coals mighty quick, and the girls that chose to flirt with him."

"No wonder you stop to take breath," one of the girls laughed. "I do believe that's the longest speech you ever made in your life, Bess."

"And all wasted, too, as far as I'm concerned," quoth Maurice. "Bess is always getting up steam about something or other. I pity poor Hazelton. If he'd had a leaf out of my book, he never would have proposed, Bess."

"Bess ought to have fallen in love with Mr. Forbes," Katharine decided. "He's just mollicoddle enough on that point to suit her."

"Still waters run deep," one of the attendant cavaliers observed with trite wisdom. "I observed that he didn't object to a moonlight stroll with your wife, Maurice. Let us go and look them up."

His proposition was accepted by all but Maurice and his fair companion, who, with another couple like themselves, mooning, as we call it, to back them, vetoed the proposal. Thereupon Bess resolved not to go.

"I am the odd one," she said, "George being away, and this hammock is too tempting." She threw herself in it, and tried to get rid of some of the fiery wrath and indignation consuming her. She knew, if no one else did, how her sister felt about such scenes of which the one today was but the prototype. She knew that Adelaide would suffer any torture rather than bare her wounds for the daws about her to peck at. She knew how to value this sister, with her proud, sensitive, finely organized nature, her temperament ardent and poetic, and a mind far above the average in intellect. No wonder that Adelaide set too high a price on herself to solicit what was hers by right. No wonder that, if by turning her hand she could stay the husband who chose to drift, she would not turn it. Become the wooer where she had been the wooed? Bess knew with all her bluster that she too was cast too much in the same mould to do what she could threaten at the imagination. In reality she, too, would let suffering eat her heart out rather than beg bread in place of a stone. She, too, would be too proud to hinder a husband from casting right and left the caresses valueless, since any attractive woman might share them. If there were extenuating circumstances, neither could see them. They had not gotten rid of that old-fashioned idea that if a man loves one woman the rest are indifferent to

him and he to them. Now-a-days the majority of men don't believe in that sort of thing, and marriage seems only to give freer license. An able writer asserts that all men are Mormonistic by nature, and adds that law alone prevents them from following its teachings. Be that as it may, the majority of married men are but too willing to receive feminine attentions. Not only receive, but court them. Second nature it is with half of them, and for its gratification they sometimes pay dearly. With egregious vanity they make themselves as attractive as possible, without bestowing a thought on the suffering such a course entails on the woman who loves her husband, whose vows at the altar were not foreshadowed by the knowledge that marital caresses and love must be shared with the attractive females of their acquaintance. Men whose wives are proverbially jealous, and by whom they are sharply taken in hand, spare them some of the suffering that comes to a woman of Adelaide's stamp, for they are at least obliged to do this thing behind a jealous woman's back; and, jealous or not, any woman would rather not see it before her face. The bestowal of a husband's caresses is hard enough to bear, but are not the critical glances of the lookers-on harder still? The strain on one's system to face the ordeal successfully is no light one. Maurice Ingalls saw nothing of what his wife suffered, and had he been taxed with it, might have said, and justly, that she should not have put temptation in his way. Outsiders blamed her, but the great-hearted creature could not shut her friends out from her pleasures because her husband found them attractive. She blamed him more than she did them, and in this she was unjust, it being six of one and half a dozen of the other as far as blame goes. Either of two things she might have done—remonstrate with him, or shut down on invitations to the girls—and both were impossible for her commission. Day by day the breach widened between wife and husband, he unconscious of its existence. One there was whose lynx eyes had discovered Adelaide's unhappiness and its cause, however. Roscoe Forbes, passionately in love with Adelaide himself, always studying the beloved face, discovered in some unguarded moment the treasured secret. Though she knew nothing of his love for her, some words he had let fall in one of his angry moods of resentment at

Maurice revealed that he knew her wretchedness, and despised and hated the author. But not a word would she permit him to utter against her husband, and how it hurt the proud woman to feel herself an object of pity, while it hardened her more against Maurice for placing her in the position. Fate ought to have united Forbes and Mrs. Ingalls, so similar were their tastes and sentiments. He in his black moods cursed fate, whilst she sighed to think how much happiness was lost because Maurice was not like Forbes. It was well she did not guess he loved her. For such a woman, and in the position she occupied toward Maurice, the temptation to retaliate would have been powerful and dangerous.

But this is a digression. The story opens on one of the islands that dot the bosom of the broad Atlantic. It belonged to Maurice, who had bought it in his bachelor days as a haunt for his yachting companions and himself. At that time there were a number of cottages on the island still remaining occupied by fishermen who dwelt there year in and year out, no wish above their humble lot, happier in it than many a crowned head. After the marriage of Maurice, he built a large mansion on the highest point of the island, which commanded a magnificent view of the surroundings, particularly at sunset, when the clouds, tinged purple, crimson, and gold, of all shades and hues, were reflected with added glory on the bosom of the mighty deep, which throbbed tumultuously or lay fair and placid in its treacherous beauty, while the clear sky varied from blue to a fine green at the horizon. Down on the narrow beach the tide waves dash and foam, raving in impotent fury at the resistant barrier that bars their way. Then when the last faint glimmerings of light have disappeared, and night has vanquished day; when the gloom deepens, to be broken soon by the radiant moon and her starry satellites—ah! the scene then must be better felt than described.

At some distance from the island, observing it from the ocean, it appears an irregular mass of rocks rising abruptly from the sea, and outlined against the clear sky in many fantastic, uncanny shapes. On nearer approach you were undeceived. A narrow strip of rocky beach formed the only landing-place, on either side of which rose steep cliffs stretching off to meet other rocky heights, their summits crowned with wav-

ing grass, with here and there bright wild flowers and the obnoxious thistle. The beach ascended in a gentle hill whose brow was studded with the cottages before mentioned. Westward a well-worn path led to the Ingalls mansion.

It was to this delightful spot that the Ingallses went every June with their *coterie* of fair women and brave men, who spent the summer in flirting desperately and angling outrageously. Katharine Chaucere was one to whom love was a jest, but her pretences of the tender passion were something wonderful. If she indeed owned a heart, she was not credited with its possession. Her wonderful beauty, dangerous fascinations, and voice of rare sweetness, had lured many a victim whose heart was first lost in the tangled meshes of her red-gold hair and witchery of the soft brown eyes whose lambent glances were unfathomable. The jetty, deep-fringed lashes hid many a gleam of triumph and amusement at the adorer's expense, and the ripe lips he had kissed so passionately curled scornfully at the remembrance. No one gauged her attractions more accurately than Adelaide, whose heart sickened as she saw how completely Maurice was enthralled by them. When she with the rest of the party returned to the piazza, the voices of both mingling in that exquisite melody "The Soldier's Farewell" fell upon their ears, holding one and all entranced as their magnificent voices rose and fell with sad, sweet harmony. An encore was called for, which Katharine refused, declaring that she was tired and sleepy, and had only been waiting for their return to retire; so, setting the example, the rest followed except Bess. Maurice got as far as the door, then retraced his steps and joined her. Her eyes were closed, but she opened them, and gazed steadily up in his face with a look that half puzzled, half annoyed him; a look that was reproachful, accusing, and meditative.

"Well, what is it?" he asked, impatiently. "One would think I had been doing something dreadful, rather than entertaining a pretty woman. One thing I'd like you to understand, Bess, that such remarks as you made tonight were in very poor taste, and your slang also. Not that I care an atom myself, but you'll keep on with those sayings until nobody will come near us."

"Really?" Bess inquired, with provoking

nonchalance. "Don't concern yourself! The girl knew too well which side the bread is buttered on to forsake you. If you think my remarks were in bad taste, let me tell you that your behaviour was in worse. If you haven't any regard for your own reputation, you might show a little for your wife's feelings."

"Oh, Adelaide don't mind. She knows I must *passer le temps* somehow."

"You're blind as a bat if you can't see she is breaking her heart over it."

"Come, Bess, that's sheer nonsense. Why, any one would laugh at you. Adelaide breaking her heart! Preposterous! Well, you always were the most imaginative little goosie. I'll tell her what you say, and we'll laugh over your folly together."

"You'll do nothing of the kind. She'd never forgive me for saying a word. Watch her, and you'll find out who the fool is—you or I. Oh! I have no patience with you, Maurice! No, you needn't help me out! I'm not one of the girls! There's no fun in putting your arm around my waist!"

"That's true enough, you little Indian. What a forlorn wretch I should be if the girls snubbed me like you do. Ease your mind of one doubt, my spicy little sister. My heart is all Addie's, except a *very* small corner belonging to you."

Bess looked up with a bright, glad smile which transfigured her face. "Ah, Maurice!" she said, softly, "I doubt not that it is your head rather than your heart that is wrong."

For a few days after this conversation Bess had no fault to find with Maurice, who certainly had mended his ways. Neither he nor Bess had mentioned their chat to Adelaide, who, marvelling at the change, was too entirely happy to seek a reason. It was enough that the husband had returned to the lover; that she, and not the girls, was the object of his gallantries. Adelaide never looked back on those days afterward without a strong shudder, so much that was horrible followed the bright, peaceful days which contrasted so vividly with the blackness of the deep waters through which she passed.

Katharine's ruthless hand demolished her castle of hope and happiness. If Maurice meant to let her alone, she did not intend that he should pay careless tribute to her charms. His desertion had been flung in

her teeth with some unpalatable taunts by Forbes, who thus unconsciously struck the match for the consumption of the happiness of the woman he loved. Katharine resolved to bring Maurice to her feet, and there was no fear of failure. She always won in a game of hearts. Married or single, it was all the same. Having wound up her victims to the highest pitch of their sensual nature—for she inspired no pure passion—and in the process gaining new experience for new victims, she coldly pronounced the fiat of separation, unmoved at their anguish and mad despair, and always contriving to leave them impressed in a vague way of using her unfairly. Plenty of idle stories were set afloat by some few, but most of her victims were men whose honor, and then again the fear of ridicule, prevented from betraying her true character. She never wanted knights to buckle on their armor in her defence. When she was sixteen she had been jilted the first and last time, and this had made a devil of her, striking out utterly all the good points in her nature. Pity she had none, and the suffering of others was her keenest delight. She lived but for one object—to win hearts and break them. Therefore she made herself mistress of every art and witchery. These were so numerous, and of so many shades, and withal the colors ran into each other by such imperceptible gradations, that it was impossible to tell where they began, while they were apparently endless. At first they had the same effect upon a man's heart that a puzzle has upon the brain, but, unlike the puzzle, they were unsolvable, and daily the study grew more dangerous, taking away his moral and physical strength. And this was the woman who resolved to subjugate Maurice, for whom the rest of the men on the island, already dying after her, were to be made cats'-paws of in such a way that not one but would think he was *the* one.

Was she not invincible enough that fate should assist her? Adelaide was attacked just at this time with a chronic trouble, nothing dangerous, but enough to keep her in-doors a good part of the time, especially evenings. Men as a rule are not partial to sick-rooms, especially when there is more attraction elsewhere. Bess had gone off with some friends to the mountains, and Roscoe Forbes had departed in a fierce mood. The coast was clear.

No one to thwart Katharine's tactics and

defend Adelaide's happiness, the rest being too intent on their own plans to heed aught else. Yet the most vigilant eye could have detected nothing amiss in her first movements as she took good care of that. Maurice himself, the most unsuspecting of men, thought nothing of it, when, go where he would, he always came across her. At first they would chat a few moments and then separate, but the few moments were full of danger to him, as she always said or did something that stayed in his mind haunting him with tantalizing fascination. Poor Maurice grew hopelessly entangled in the siren's web, until he at last reached that climax so many have reached before him. Living out of her presence was torture. In her arms, lip to lip, heart to heart, his veins thrilled with the mad fierce passion what would he not have bartered for its gratification? Away from her, his soul—like the iron between the two magnets—wavered between right and wrong. Tortured by conscience, he would make new resolutions that melted into air in the witchery of her beauty and charms. Then he no longer despised himself, and forgot honor and every righteous principle, in the lessons she taught him. Maurice sinned blackly, but not deliberately. The strongest men at the beck and call of a bad woman are but as wax in her hands.

Katharine, having accomplished her purpose, began to tire of this fierce lover. He was not easy to deal with, and could not swallow the bait that had deluded so many. She saw it would not do to beat about the bush, but yet to tell him the truth would be to drive herself away from a resort where beaux were always plenty. As people were beginning to talk about the intimacy, she reproached him with desiring to compromise her, and attributed her coldness to that. He was but too willing to believe it, and promised solemnly to guard her reputation sacredly. But he could not always conceal his misery at her open flirtations with others, and when they met privately it was in anger rather than love. About this time Roscoe Forbes returned and brought with him his cousin, an Englishman of rank and fortune, at whom all the girls made a dead set. He ignored them all with cold stateliness except Katharine, to whom he devoted himself to his cousin's apparent annoyance and disgust. Katharine abandoned all other flirtations, and Maurice was

furious, and his jealousy was notorious. The girls, with true feminine instinct, hating Katharine for the many twinges she had caused them, revenged themselves by making an open scandal of her former intimacy with Maurice. The Englishman was blindly incredulous, and Adelaide heard it with honest indignation. In spite of Hessie's remonstrance she exerted herself to be about more, and the blow her faithful friend had averted so long fell with all its weight of misery and shame. True there was some manhood still in Maurice, and he tried to check in her presence his jealous rage, but she saw the tight rein he kept upon himself, and, generous in her keenest suffering, did all she could to help him. No one dared to openly pity her, and when Forbes said something in hot wrath against Maurice, she sternly forbade him to mention her husband's faults to his wife. To Maurice she never opened her lips on the subject. Only Hessie knew how her friend's heart was wrung and pride humbled.

"Dear friend," Hessie said one night as they sat alone together, "why won't you follow my suggestion? Surely it would be better to go away from here than drag out another month of horrible suffering. Take him away from the temptation he is not strong enough to resist."

"Never!" Adelaide answered, fiercely. "Let him fight it out the best he may. He has outraged my woman's heart and pride! What more can he do? And yet, ah, Hessie, you know me better than I know myself. My heart yearns over him still, and longs to help him. I'll do what you suggest. This very night I'll ask him to leave this hateful spot. Let them place what construction they will on our sudden departure and their dismissal. If Maurice will consent we will go abroad, and I will stifle my pride, and try to help him forget."

"Be sure it will not be hard work. Such mad passions die a swift but sure death. A year from now he will wonder at his folly, and you will be the happiest wife in the world."

"I wish I could look on the bright side! Hessie, dear, what should I have done through all this trying time but for you! They're calling us to go to sail. I'm not going, but you must. Yes, dear; I insist upon it. I won't have you tie yourself down to me all the time."

She overruled Hessie's remonstrances, and after the party had started set out for

her favorite haunt, a rocky nook or sort of arbor, whose walls nature had formed in a novel and picturesque way. She took out her diary and wrote rapidly for some time until prevented by the deepening shadows. Looking off on the water she saw the yacht afar off, its white sail full, sailing gallantly along, looking like some great bird on the dark waters. The sight of it plunged her into bitter reverie, so painful was the contrast between the present and the past. When the yacht was built she was a happy bride, now a wretched and forsaken wife. How long she sat thus she could not tell. She was roused by the murmur of voices, and glancing sharply up saw, not ten rods from her, Maurice and Katharine Chaucer. Adelaide was spellbound. Believing both on the yacht, and seeing them in this unlooked-for place, filled her with a vague fear. The two, greatly excited, passed her without seeing her. From the point where she was sheltered, the rocks ascended until they reached a summit fifty feet above the level of the sea. Standing on the brink of this rocky height one saw that it descended into the sea by a perpendicular wall whose base rested on a mass of jagged rocks, against whose sides the sea raged and foamed, making a grand but awful sight. Adelaide watched the pair with eyes of dumb misery and anger without attempting to attract their attention, possessed with a dogged determination to listen to their conversation. The voices of the two floated downward, and every word was distinctly audible. The listener wondered not at their choice of that spot which was frequented only in the daytime. Adelaide heard the angry recriminations of the pair, Maurice's fierce reproaches, passionate appeals, Katharine's soft palavering which for once were fruitless. Impatient and reckless at last she cried out fiercely,

"Hear the truth then! I never loved you! My heart is as dead and cold to you as the stone on which we stand! I won your heart to gratify a mere caprice, and having won it fling it back to you. I would have told you this before had it not interfered with my plans. Now they are perfected and tomorrow I leave your wife in undisturbed possession of her precious husband. Before my departure I shall expect the congratulations of my friends, for as soon as my trousseau can be got ready I am to marry Sir Henry Forbes."

She ended with a mocking laugh, which roused Maurice from the blank apathy into which her words had plunged him. Bending towards her he hissed some words in her ear. Adelaide could not hear them, but the bright moonlight showed her beautiful features stamped with white fury, and her eyes glittering with dangerous light.

"Liar and coward!" she shrieked. Before the words were dead on her pale lips, Maurice in blind insane fury had flung his arms about her, and ere Adelaide could draw her horrified breath, both had disappeared over the cliff. Katharine's maddened shrieks rang out on the still night air, then all was quiet. Adelaide staggered up and essayed to climb the ascent. Her limbs refused to support her, and flinging her arms up with a faint moan she sank upon the hard rocks unconscious.

Down at the landing Katharine's screams were heard by the party coming ashore from the yacht. With blanched faces they looked at each other with eyes of mild questioning. With one impulse they proceeded in the direction from which the screams had come. Roscoe Forbes was the first to reach the spot, and almost fell over Adelaide's prostrate form. She had struck her head in falling, and the wound was bleeding profusely. While he was trying to stanch the wound one of the men chanced to look over the cliff.

"My God!" he cried in horror, with a face like death, and pointed downward. The rest looked and turned away, shuddering at the ghastly sight, too horrible to particularize. Wonder and speculation were rife, but the wildest conjecture did not hit the truth. Sir Henry Forbes, looking as if he had aged suddenly, said something to the men in low tones, whose import the women caught, some of whom were in a dreadful state of hysterics or fainting fits, and those who had their wits about them had their hands full. The men who had an hour before been so care free and gay, set out with heavy hearts to perform their loathsome task, at which the stoutest hearted might quake. Forbes had carried Adelaide in his strong arms to the house, followed by Hessie, in whose breast some vague intuition of the truth lurked. Forbes, who had studied the science of medicine for pastime, found it come in good play. Tenderly he dressed the wound, but all his efforts to restore consciousness for the first half-hour were futile.

After that time expired, unconsciousness lapsed into wildest delirium. Over and over the scene on the rocks was gone over, and the two watchers gazed at each other with horror-struck eyes.

"She must be got to bed immediately," Forbes said in a hoarse, unnatural voice. "I will send some one to help you," and he turned to leave the room. Hessie placed a detaining hand on his arm, and gazed at him with solemn eyes.

"Send no one in here," she said, in a whisper. "What is to be done I will do alone. No babbling tongues must hear what we have heard. She has had enough shame and suffering to bear without the additional blow of the world's knowledge of her husband's crime. There are no ends of justice to be accomplished, and we do no wrong. Let God judge between those poor lost wretches. You surely would not add a feather's weight to *her* unhappiness?" she appealed, as he remained silent.

"I would give my life for her," he asserted with passionate energy, and in that moment Hessie learned his secret. "I will administer this soothing draught"—he went on in a changed tone—"and as soon as she is under its influence it will not be difficult for you to manage. I shall be within call if you need me."

All that night Hessie kept her faithful and lonely vigil. There were others willing to share it, but Forbes's orders were imperative, and none questioned Hessie's right to be the chosen one. No one went to bed, but, grouped together, started nervously at every sound and speculated over the catastrophe. The general verdict was that Katharine had slipped accidentally, and Maurice in his despair had recklessly gone to her rescue, to meet, like her, a horrible death. At midnight the men returned with the disfigured remains. Only the faces remained unmarred, the glorious beauty of each stamped with ineffaceable agony.

Forbes despatched two of the men in the row boat to the nearest town to send telegrams bearing such dire desolation to the recipients. Unwilling to bear the responsibility of Adelaide's case, he thought proper to also telegraph for his friend Dr. Bristow, one of the most eminent physicians of the day. The next day about noon a small steamer anchored off the island, and the physician and bereaved friends and relatives came ashore. A consultation was held, and

it was decided that the bodies be removed to town, the funeral to take place the next day. Dr. Bristow decided that it would be useless to delay the burial on the poor wife's account, as hers was a bad case of brain fever. Of her recovery he had grave doubts. Therefore on the evening of that day, the island was deserted by all save the inmates of the cottages, Adelaide and her servants, and her two faithful friends, Hessie and Forbes. Neither had any desire to attend the funeral service, which must have been a mockery to them, the eloquence of the preacher, commenting on the dispensation of Providence, his eulogism of the virtues of the dead, and oblivion of their vices producing a far different effect upon them than upon the many who thronged the sacred edifice, all agape to see the last of the dreadful catastrophe. If Katharine's dead lips could proclaim the truth, if Maurice could justify his act by telling how she goaded him to madness, would those who listened profit by it? There is more than one Katharine in the world, and plenty of men like Maurice.

After the funeral was over Bess went down to the island to share Hessie's labors, and of course she learned the truth. It was then that all Hessie's powers were taxed, in diverting Bess's mind from the horror the shock occasioned. Were there more women in the world like Hessie, it would be purer and better. Prior to the affair, Roscoe Forbes had regarded her indifferently, and she certainly had wasted no thought on him. But two such people could not share labors of a character which brings out the noblest attributes of any nature, without experiencing a mutual liking. Not that they fell in love. Forbes had no heart to bestow, and Hessie knew it. But they became friends in all that the word truly means. Forbes was certainly the gainer.

Fate works in strange channels. Two lives were suddenly ended, the cords rudely snapped between husband and wife, and yet but for that same thing, Hessie had never met Dr. Bristow. He saw Hessie, and found the ideal long enshrined in his heart. Thus in his visits to the island he did two things—saved Adelaide's life and won Hessie for his wife, so that fate, in severing two, united two. Forbes was well pleased at their union, which took place shortly after Adelaide was able to be moved from the island. It was a twelvemonth before she fully re-

covered her health, and then the period of her wedded life and all that went with it was a blank to her. The names of Katharine and Maurice are unmeaning to her. Her memory on every other point is perfect, and perhaps Heaven is merciful in keeping that a blank. Forbes had no difficulty in winning the woman he loved, and rejoices that she has no remembrance of Maurice, and that thus all her heart is his. Should the awakening ever come, shielded by his true and tender love the blow may not fall too heavily. God knows best, and if it be his will to call back that part of her life he will fit the back for the burden.

The island fraught with such terrible

memories passed into other hands, who tell the story of the terrible death to awestruck friends, who listen shudderingly, gazing down on the treacherous rocks and cruel sea that tells no tales. That is a spot where none have been known to think of flirtation or gay badinage. That is a spot where no lovers wander, but is sought merely out of curiosity and turned from with relief. None of the party who were staying at the island when the affair occurred ever revisited it. Sir Henry Forbes sailed back to England without the bride who would have queened it right royally as the mistress of his ancestral estates. Alas! what a heavy penalty she paid for the gratification of a caprice.

AN ESCAPEDE.

BY HANNAH R. HUDSON.

"Go to the Masquerade Ball at Briarley! You're joking. Go to a ball, from the Tiverton Female Institute? Why Nina Evarts, if they found it out, what *would* they do to me!" And the speaker, a girl of seventeen, whirled around from a window out of which she had been watching the deepening twilight.

"But they *wont* find it out!" The girl who responded, hastily locked the door and lighted the gas to consult a watch lying on the dressing-table. Dear! Dear! it's half past six! I hadn't time to speak to you before supper. Now," she continued rapidly, "don't say a word, but just listen. Dick has been trying to see you or me for a week, to ask you to go to this dance to-night, but the April examinations have kept us both busy you know. This afternoon he seized the last opportunity, and came up to the Institute and asked for me. Being my brother, Miss McKenzie allowed him to see me alone, and between us, we've planned how you can go to-night and never be suspected—if you only will."

"If I will! But how—"

"Put on this gray suit of mine while I'm talking. There isn't a minute to lose! In the first place I have leave to spend the evening at home. Mr. Norcross promised me one evening before Dick goes back to New York, and I've taken this one. Here's the permit: 'Miss Nina Evarts can go out at seven and return at half past eleven.' Now we're of the same height and size, and you're to put on my suit and a thick veil and go out instead of me. You're to go to the village—to our house—and from there you and Dick can drive to Briarley, put on dominoes at the hotel, and dance three hours without anybody's being wiser, for you wont need to unmask. You'll have to leave at eleven, you see, to get back here in time."

"But see here," was the excited rejoinder as the speaker still stood motionless, with the dress in her hand. "I haven't a domino, and I can't be absent from prayers—"

"That's all right. I asked Miss McKenzie if you could retire, before I came up stairs. I said you had headache, and I'll

go to bed instead of you. And Dick purchased a domino, on the chance of your going, so that will be ready. Now don't say 'no,' Lou! There can't be anything wrong in having a little fun."

"It's ever so good of you and Dick to plan it for me. But what about my hair? I can't make my short black curls look like light braids."

"You can hairpin my false braids on behind. Only hurry, for there's hardly twenty minutes!"

"But if any of the girls should speak to me on the way out, or if the portress—"

"O, you can mimic me and wear a double veil. But *do* begin to dress!" Nina cried, in an agony of impatience.

Lou still stood the picture of indecision. She had yielded to her roommate's eagerness, however, far enough to slip on the walking boots that were laid before her.

"O, if I only dared—"

"Dared? Why, no one will *ever* know. How can they? And if you don't go, Dick wont have another chance to see you before he leaves. He'll be so disappointed, too. And I take as much risk as you."

One of these last arguments appeared to have carried the day. The cheeks shaded by the short jetty curls were suspiciously flushed, and Lou finished buttoning her boots, with sudden celerity. There was only one more demur, made while the gray dress and cloak were being hurried on.

"I don't see how we can start from your house unless your mother knows."

"Mamma's away for the day and evening. There's only Dick and the servants at home. Dick was coming to the Institute for you, but I told him he'd better meet you somewhere on the road. You know I wasn't sure of your going. See what a splendid moonlight night it is going to be! There—now one more hairpin, and I guess the switch will stay on."

"It feels as though it was all hairpins," Lou said, wincing, as she gave a tilt to her hat.

Nina stifled a laugh.

"The rubber will help hold the hair on. Now the veil—there—there—that's perfect?"

"Do I look like you?" Lou asked, anxiously, surveying the reflection of a petite young lady in a close-fitting gray suit, with a blue veil tied over a coquettish hat and a mass of blonde hair.

"Exactly. Don't stop to prink. Here—put these slippers and gloves in your pocket and take your permit. Hurry down before the girls come out of their rooms."

A moment later Lou was running down the great staircase, upon which, luckily, she only met the postman. Hastening across the deserted lower hall, she paused for breath before entering the lobby, into which she walked with fear and trembling. The portress, however, only gave her a nod and a glance as she handed in the permit.

Lou forced herself to walk decorously down the hill, but when the avenue gates clashed behind her, she finally dismissed apprehension. She could have capered with delight at her freedom as she hurried on in the windy moonlit March evening; now and then she *did* skip jubilantly over the frozen ground in a fashion that Miss McKenzie would never have approved of.

Fully a mile of lonely road lay between her and the village. She had scarcely walked over ten rods of this distance, when, in the midst of her self-congratulations, she heard another clash of the avenue gates. Glancing over her shoulder, she beheld, silhouetted against the moonlit sky, a tall erect figure in a cap and cloak. Nemesis in person, could hardly have created a greater panic in the breast of a delinquent. The individual approaching was no other than Mr. Norcross, Principal of the Tiverton Female Institute—a most rigid and uncompromising disciplinarian, as his pupils had reason to know. Of course, he was taking his usual evening walk to town. Lou wondered why she had not remembered that he always went to the village at seven. Worse yet, he was evidently hastening a little in order to overtake and accompany the supposed Miss Nina Evarts.

Here was a situation! Lou first stopped short, then went on at redoubled speed. In that instant's pause she had thought of inventing an errand back and risking recognition far enough to pass the principal and exchange a good-evening. But it was only too probable that Mr. Norcross's old-fashioned notions of courtesy would prompt him to accompany her back and wait for her. O, if it had only been dark! As it was,

if he should succeed in overtaking her, the principal's keen eyes and ears would surely penetrate her disguise. O, what if he *should* find out that it was she! Visions of expulsion and disgrace flashed through Lou's mind as she hurried on at a rate that must certainly have excited the astonishment of her preceptor.

In spite of her advantage at the start, she soon found, to her dismay, that one of Mr. Norcross's strides was equal to three of her steps. It was like the old example of the hound and hare. Finding that she would infallibly be overtaken if she did not increase her speed, and knowing that her safety and Nina's depended on her keeping ahead, Lou finally began to run.

Alas! the hair fastened on the back of her head was not secure enough to resist the shocks of such violent locomotion. To her horror, she felt it sway perilously, then break loose on one side. Unable to pause in her flight, she held the slippery mass on with one hand and ran faster than ever, inspired with energy by the sound of the principal's steady footfalls behind.

Half the distance was passed over—three quarters—and still Lou struggled on with what breath she had left. She felt like one in a nightmare; the further she advanced the further off the village lights seemed to be. And what Mr. Norcross was thinking of the actions of the supposed Miss Evarts, she hardly liked to imagine.

The principal had been gaining a little, owing to Lou's exhaustion, and, as she hurried, panting, into the first street of the village, he was still coming on, fresh as ever. Just here as ill luck would have it, the fugitive stumbled on the pavement and fell to the ground. Hat, veil and hair rolled off behind her.

The principal was not six yards behind, when Lou, raising herself on one tingling elbow, grasped the hat and veil, scrambled to her feet and fled, leaving the hair perforce, as a trophy for her pursuer. Without casting one glance behind, she fled round the nearest corner and almost ran into the arms of a tall dark young fellow handsome enough to fit the ideal of a boarding-school girl, who had been about to turn the aforesaid corner, and who, on recognizing Lou, tossed off his cap with an exclamation of delight:

"So you *have* come! But what's the matter? Is any one after you?"

The only answer was an incoherent ejaculation and a beckoning motion, as Lou ran on, down one street and up another, followed fast by the wondering Dick, who overtook her on the steps of the Evarts mansion. Once safely in the parlor, she sat down on an ottoman and gasped for breath. Dick, in the last stages of curiosity, controlled himself far enough to bring a glass of water then a glass of wine, and then a fan. These restoratives finally gave Lou strength to tell her story, at the relation of which concern and amusement struggled for the mastery in the listener's mind. The latter at length predominated, and at the thought of the principal's becoming possessed of Nina's hair, the young host laughed till the tears stood in his eyes.

"You're sure he didn't recognize you?"

"I don't think he did. But how I shall ever get into the Institute without that hair, I can't imagine."

Lou forgot her worries, however, when she was behind a fleet horse, fairly on her way to Briarley. The reader needs no description of the runaway expedition of two young people who are in love with each other. It is unnecessary to say that no unpleasant initial adventure could mar the bliss of a long ride by moonlight, and an evening of sauntering, waltzing and sentimentalizing, protected by their masks from criticism and notice. The three hours at the ball passed like a dream, and when the clock hands finally pointed to eleven, neither could believe it true.

"I feel like Cinderella," Lou said, laughing, when they were again seated in the carriage, "and Nina was the godmother who sent me to the ball."

"And am I the prince?" Dick asked, with a glance of those irresistible dark eyes that had broken the hearts of half the girls in Tiverton village. Lou waved the question.

"I've had a charming evening, and I feel like a different girl after this little bit of pleasure."

A brief silence ensued. "That ominous silence," as it is sometimes called, "that precedes a proposal."

In this case silence was really a forerunner. Before half the distance to Tiverton had been travelled over, Dick had dropped the reins and was holding both Lou's hands, while he poured forth all the ardent nonsense young fellows always utter in declar-

ing first love. His hearer sat with bent head and burning cheeks, neither attempting, nor wishing, to check him. Is it strange that the actors in this little drama forgot everything but each other?

The horse proceeded at his chosen pace. The occupants of the buggy had found "that new world, which is the old." Gazing into the rosy far future, they were quite oblivious of time, until the horse's funereal progress finally brought them in sight of the first church clock in Tiverton. Then a horrified sudden exclamation from Dick startled his companion.

"Good heavens! What have I been thinking of!"

Lou's glance followed his and rested on the clock, just visible in the waning moonlight and pointing ten minutes of twelve.

Dick seized the reins. Not a word passed between him and the frightened girl at his side, till they had dashed like mad through Tiverton village, and were fairly on the road leading to the Institute. Lou had shaken out the blue veil, and was winding it about her head with nervous haste.

"You mustn't drive further than the gates. This clatter will wake everybody up. I must get out and run the rest of the way."

Dick pulled up the horse and leaped to the ground.

"I'll run with you then. Take my arm. Can you get in if you get there before twelve?" he said, rapidly.

"Yes—but not after. The rules are strict," was the hurried response as the speaker gathered up her dress for another race.

"Confound the rules!" Dick could not help saying. "We have five minutes yet. Come then!"

Up the hill they ran like two wild Indians. Having gained the summit, Lou paused breathless before the great door.

"You must go away before I ring."

"Why should I? Ring away! Can't I escort my sister?" was the impatient inquiry.

"Is my veil all right?" in a nervous whisper.

"All correct. Don't be frightened."

How the bell echoed through the quiet Institute hall! Not a sound within indicated life, but there was a reassuring gleam of light from the janitor's little window. Lou shook with excitement and cold as she stood

listening to the steps that presently shuffled nearer and nearer to the other side of the door.

"He's an old man. I don't believe he can see very well any way," whispered Dick. "You had better let me make excuses for you."

There was no time to answer. The door was opened and the gray head of the janitor was thrust out. He was evidently rather surly at this late disturbance.

"What's wanted?" holding up his hand-lamp to get a better view of the persons waiting.

Before Lou could say a word Dick stepped forward.

"My sister, Miss Evarts, has been home for the evening, and had permission to remain till half past eleven. She was detained by an accident—a fall on the way here—" was the unblushing conclusion.

"Eh? O! A fall on this kind o' ground aint much of a joke. Hurt ye much, miss?"

"Not a great deal," Lou responded, taking advantage of the opening of the door to enter with rather ungraceful haste. "I'm sorry to be so late."

"Well, ye can make your own excuse in the morning;" and the janitor looked at Dick as if he wondered why he did not go away. That young gentleman, however, still stood his ground, and even followed Lou into the lobby, saying aloud:

"You have forgotten to bid me good-night!"

Lou, taken by surprise, submitted, as her audacious lover bent down and kissed her, quite ignoring the watchful janitor.

"Good-night. I shall see you to-morrow;" and with a pressure of the hand and the politest of bows to the janitor, Dick departed. As for Lou, she fled up stairs with burning cheeks. The janitor watching from below, commented, as he shuffled back to his room:

"Humph! Guess that fall didn't hurt her much, if she can run like that."

The next morning, as the true Miss Nina Evarts was passing through the hall with a roll of music in her hand, she came face to face with the principal, who bowed in his gravest fashion, and glanced at her hair, which was arranged less elaborately than usual.

"Will you have the goodness to step into my room, Miss Evarts?"

Nina, divided between the impulse to laugh and the impulse to run away, perforce complied and stood waiting with a face she tried hard to make demure, while Mr. Norcross, unlocking a private drawer, took therefrom some braids of blonde hair, saying stiffly:

"I believe this is your property, Miss Evarts."

Nina bowed and blushed brightly as she received her lost locks, knowing well that a lecture was about to follow.

"Your deportment on the street last night was very singular—nay more, I considered it highly improper. What was the occasion of your haste?"

"I—I wanted a long evening at home," stammered poor Nina, thrusting the braids in her pocket.

"I cannot allow any young lady under my charge to forget her dignity so entirely on a public street. I consider, however, that your fall was punishment enough, on this occasion. If you had waited a moment, I would have helped you up."

"I—I didn't hurt me much."

"I understand that you were late home in consequence of another fall. You seem to have been unfortunate. I think I cannot give you permission to spend another evening at home, at present. That is all—you may go." And Nina hurried away.

Five minutes later she ran up stairs, where Lou was sitting busy with papers of problems, and tossing the hair into a bureau drawer, exclaimed, triumphantly:

"We've escaped!"

"It's a hair-breadth escape, though!" Lou said with a laugh.

AN INNOCENT FLIRTATION.

BY JAMES DABNEY.

MISS KITTY BELL was a beauty; and she knew it. She had half the town at her feet, and had fairly turned the heads of the other half. She enjoyed her triumphs greatly, and was determined to carry them to the utmost limits. *She was a good-hearted girl*, but vain and giddy. Moreover, Miss Kitty Bell was a flirt of the first order. She coquetted outrageously with all who were willing to place themselves in her power, and she counted the hearts she had trifled with and cast aside by the score. Her friends remonstrated with her, but Kitty only laughed and declared that she enjoyed the sport, and that the men liked her all the better for it. If the men did like her for it, the women did not, and the young lady had many a sharp encounter with those of her own sex who reproached her for her unwomanly conduct. Finally, mothers sought to warn their sons against the beautiful girl, for it came to be the common opinion of the town that Kitty Bell was utterly heartless. Still the beauty had her throng of admirers, and she was so fascinating that the men cared very little for the warnings they received.

Among her admirers was a young man a few years older than herself. He was the only son of the minister of the town, and a frank handsome fellow—a favorite with all who knew him, and the especial pride of his father. Frank Wayne was a warm-hearted impulsive young man, possessed of a nature capable of being made good or evil, according to the influence brought to bear upon it, but with little strength of his own. He became deeply smitten with the young woman's beauty, just after his return from college, and for a long while—longer than usual—he seemed to be a favored suitor. Her brightest smiles, softest words, and her most winning glances were for him, and, in three weeks after he knew her, the young man was too deeply in love with her to heed the warnings of his friends.

His father now perceived the turn affairs had taken, and, wishing to save his son from pain, frankly told him what a desperate flirt Kitty Bell was, and urged him as he valued his peace of mind to remove him-

self from her influence. The young man only laughed—what lover ever believed aught against his mistress?—and assured his father that he was in no danger. Mr. Wayne was not satisfied of this, but seeing himself powerless to do otherwise, waited anxiously the result of the matter.

His father's warning troubled Frank Wayne strangely, and, in order to reduce the matter to a certainty, he determined to see Kitty Bell that day, tell her of his love for her, and ask her to be his wife. Full of hope and joyful expectation he sought her presence. She had never seemed more beautiful than she was then, and she received him with more than usual warmth. Somehow she knew, intuitively the object of his visit, and she wished to draw him on to his confession, for she enjoyed hearing men avow their love for her, and she was such an expert at undeceiving them.

What passed between them at that meeting no one ever knew; but in an hour Kitty went up to her chamber with flashing eyes and a flushed angry face, and Frank Wayne went home with a wild heart-broken look, as if his last earthly hope had fled and left him in despair. Indeed, he was more like a madman than the light-hearted fellow he had been in the morning. He had staked all his life upon the decision of the woman he loved, and had lost. He went home, and shut himself up in his chamber.

That night there was excitement in the town. People spoke in low tones, with frightened faces and wondering eyes, and soon it became known to Kitty Bell that young Frank Wayne had shot himself, and was dead. His father refused to speak of the cause of the act, and no one in the town knew it; yet Kitty thought she understood it all, and shudderingly tried to drive the thoughts from her.

Two days later Frank Wayne was buried. A minister from an adjoining town came and officiated in the place of the grief-stricken father. The church was very full, and prominent among the throng sat Kitty Bell—pale, but very beautiful. She had heard it rumored that she had driven young Wayne to his death, and she meant to brave

out the charge by appearing at his funeral.

When the services were over, and they were about to bear out the body, Mr. Wayne rose from where he had been sitting in the chancel, and advanced to the railing.

"My friends," he said, calmly, "bear with me one moment. I have been greatly afflicted, and the chastening hand of my Heavenly Father is laid heavily upon me. Until now I have said nothing of the cause of the death of my son. My boy was murdered." A thrill of horror passed through the throng, and the minister continued, "Yes! murdered by a woman. She lured him on to ruin by her beauty, and winning smiles, and lying words, and when he laid before her all his love and tenderness, she flung it back with contempt. In his an-

guish and despair he hurried unbidden into the presence of his Maker. I dare not extenuate his rash act, I dare not palliate its wickedness; but, here, before my God, I denounce that woman as his murderess."

The minister's trembling hand pointed to where Kitty Bell sat rigid as a stone. The look of scorn faded from his face, as he gazed at her, and with an expression of horror he sprang to her side. She glanced at him for a moment, and then broke into a peal of wild laughter that rang in the ears of those that heard it long years after the sound had died away. Kitty Bell had gone mad.

People said it was the hand of God. Perhaps it was. At all events it was a terrible end for "an innocent flirtation."

ARTHUR AND HIS FAITHFUL DOG.

BY MINNIE MADDERN.

"O MAMMA, mamma! just think what is coming!" cried Arthur Graves, bursting into the sitting-room one cold evening where his father, mother and sister were.

"What is it, my dear? One would almost think the world was coming to an end by the manner you rush into the house—and you are all out of breath. Come here," said Mrs. Graves, untying Arthur's scarf. It was a very cold day in December, and a fire crackled cheerfully on the hearth.

"What is all this fuss about—have you seen a giant, Arthur?" asked Mr. Graves, playfully, drawing Arthur on his knee.

"No! but I hope to, soon—look at that, mamma," said Arthur, displaying a large handbill, and giving it to his mother.

"Where did you get this from, my child?" asked she, after glancing over it.

"While I was out playing with the other boys a man came along, and was handing these to every one he met. Read it aloud, mamma."

Mrs. Graves then read aloud an account of a circus and menagerie which was to be in L— during the holidays—the various kinds of animals and curiosities connected with it—from the big giant to the little dwarf whose head was scarcely on a level with the giant's boots.

"Can we go, mamma?" asked Ada, springing from her chair, all excitement at the idea of visiting a circus.

"My dear, I know of nothing to prevent you, and if your father consents, I have already done so."

"O, you dear, dear, darling mamma, you have made me so happy," said Arthur, clapping his hands and dancing around in childlike glee.

"But you have not asked me yet," said

Mr. Graves, playfully; "now suppose I don't let you go."

"We're not afraid," said both children, running out of the room, to tell the happy news to their brothers and sister.

Mr. Graves was a wealthy gentleman, and with his large family lived in a picturesque old-fashioned house in the suburbs of L—. Ada, the eldest, was a pretty girl of fourteen summers, very much in feature like her twin brothers Frank and Charlie. Then came Gay, a bright little fairy of nine—and lastly Arthur, the pet of the house, a lively little fellow of five years. Mr. Graves's sister also resided with them—Aunt Grace, a great favorite with all the children. While telling you of the occupants of the house, I must not omit Bruno, though he was only a dog. Bruno was a large Newfoundland, with the honest brown eyes peculiar to that noble animal. Bruno had on several occasions shown his skill and done the family great service. Once, when Frank had fallen into the river, he plunged in and drew his little master safely to land, and when Gay was lost in the woods, conducted Mr. Graves to the spot—so, of course, Bruno was a great pet with the children.

As soon as it was generally known among them that they were going to the circus, the greatest excitement prevailed. Frank put on his father's greatcoat to play bear—Charlie got down on hands and knees growling, while the girls watched their antics, laughing until the tears rolled down their cheeks.

"Auntie Grace, aint you glad that we are all going to the circus, day after to-morrow? I guess papa will let you go, too," said Gay, at the supper-table that evening.

"I can't let your Auntie Grace go, Gay—she must stay at home and take care of the house," said Mr. Graves, pretending to be severe.

"Suppose I take it into my head to go without your consent, though?" said Aunt Grace.

"That would never do," said Mr. Graves; "but I will forgive and let you go, if you will pass me the toast."

"With all my heart, and many thanks for your kindness," said Grace, gayly.

Grace Graves was twenty-two years of age, and, as I have already said, a great favorite with the children; for she entered into all their games and sports with such goodwill and heartiness, that they looked upon her as an indulgent companion. At last the day for their visit to the circus arrived, and there never was a happier set of children than these, as they got into the old family carriage and drove off. At last they arrived, and the crowd was so great that they had a difficulty in finding seats. Presently the band struck up, and to its music there entered a number of lords and ladies on beautiful horses with trappings of gold and silver. Then there were dangerous feats performed in the air, and many other wonderful things. Presently a lion's cage was brought in—a man got into the cage and put his head into the lion's mouth. When all these performances were over, and the time came for the people to go and see the animals, Mr. Graves said it would be better to remain where they were, until the crowd had somewhat dispersed, and then they could go. Arthur, who was sitting a little distance apart, heard only the words—"we will go"—believing the others to be closely behind him, he followed the crowd to the animals' cages. In looking at all the strange sights, he did not think how the time was going. He was so much amused at watching the antics of the monkeys as they sprang chattering to and fro, that he did not notice the people leaving, until suddenly, on looking around, he found himself entirely alone. The short December day was quickly closing, and in the dim light, he could find no way of exit. He called loudly for his father, but there was no reply. *He was alone!* Terror-stricken, and with the sounds of the cries and yells of the wild beasts in his ears, he crept beneath a cage and cried bitterly, until, thoroughly exhausted, he cried himself asleep.

But how fares it with the rest of the family? As Mr. Graves had proposed, they waited, and when the crowd had dispersed went to see the animals.

"Where is Arthur?" asked Mrs. Graves.

"Walking behind with papa," replied Ada; consequently his absence was not noticed until they were getting into the carriage to return home. They waited in greatest anxiety until the people had all left, and not seeing him, concluded he must have got lost among the crowd. Mrs. Graves was beside herself with fear and terror. "Go! go—find my boy," she gasped, and fell back fainting in Grace's arms. Mr. Graves directed the driver to return home with all possible speed, while he himself went in search of the missing child.

Sad and tearful faces were watching for his return, and when at last he entered the house alone, their grief knew no bounds. Pale as a spectre, he entered his wife's room, and at a glance the unhappy mother knew that her darling had not been found. Day after day every possible inquiry was made, but all to no purpose, no tidings could be heard of the missing child. Grief and anxiety culminated in brain fever with Mrs. Graves, and for a time her life was despaired of.

But we will leave the afflicted household for a time, and see what has become of our hero. After he awoke from that long and terrible sleep on the cold damp ground, he found himself being jolted along in a wagon with three men who were conversing together. "Just the right size," said one. "Wouldn't cost much," said another, and from their conversation he learned that he was to perform in the circus. He endeavored to collect his thoughts, to cry out and ask for his mother, but fear and faintness overcame him—his brain reeled, he felt as though he were falling down some steep hill, and relapsed into unconsciousness. The next time Arthur awoke he was in a very different place. A pleasant little bedroom, a nice comfortable bed, with the pale but beautiful face of a young lady bending over him.

"Are you better, dear?" she asked, in a sweet voice.

"Yes," said Arthur, faintly, "but where is mamma?"

"My dear child, you are far away from your home."

"Yes, yes I know now," said he, "yesterday I was lost in the circus. O take me to mamma, please do;" and the poor boy clung to the lady's neck and laid his head on her breast, sobbing as though his heart would break.

"Yesterday? my poor child, it is two weeks ago—you have been very ill ever since. You were picked up from behind the cage, and given in my charge. But trust in me, I will always be your friend, my darling, for I feel for you—O, so very much!"

Days and weeks passed on, and when Arthur had sufficiently recovered he was trained to ride. Many a severe fall he had, many a cruel blow he received, and many were the bitter tears he shed for his lost home and friends. Still, his life was not all unhappiness. His bright, lovable disposition soon gained him friends among the rough but generally kind-hearted people he was associated with. He loved his friend Miss Jennie with a depth of grateful affection unusual in a child. There was also an excitement in the life he led which pleased him, and he was much attached to the pony he rode. One day, he rushed with a bright beaming face into the room where Miss Jennie was seated, sewing spangles on a dress for herself.

"O Miss Jennie!" said he, "I just heard them talking about going to L—— next week—I shall see my darling mother, and father, and Gay, and Bruno, and everybody. O, I'm so glad. And you must come with me, and—"

But Miss Jennie interrupted him, saying, sadly:

"My poor darling, I heard of our going to L—— some time ago, and wished to keep the knowledge of it from you, for the manager says he would not dare to let you perform there, and that you must be kept in your room as long as we stay."

Upon hearing this cruel sentence, poor Arthur burst into tears, crying out, "O what shall I do! Miss Jennie, I must go to mamma—I can jump out of the window—O do help me, wont you?"

"I will, my darling! I will, but what shall I do without you?" and she pressed him closer to her bosom.

But alas! when they arrived in L—— a room on the fifth floor was assigned to Arthur, and the only window it contained overlooked a pile of bricks and lumber. His

eyes almost blinded with tears, he sat at the window looking out at the well-known objects around. Suddenly he rubbed his eyes, peering out intently at some object coming down the street. With wildly-beating heart he waits until it approaches nearer.

"It is, it is Bruno! my Bruno, my darling old doggie."

On hearing his name, Bruno stopped, looked about him, caught sight of Arthur at the window, and with wild barks and frantic leaps showed his recognition of his long-lost little master.

"O Bruno! Bruno! What shall I do—how can he let them know that I am here?"

Quick as thought he tore off his little jacket, the same that he had worn on the memorable day he had last seen home, and threw it from the window. The intelligent animal seemed to know at once what was wanted, seized it in his mouth, and dashed off towards his home. Mr. Graves was sitting reading in the parlor, when suddenly he heard a scratching and barking at the door—he rose to open it, when in dashed Bruno with the jacket in his mouth. Mr. Graves instantly recognized it as belonging to Arthur.

"Thank God! my boy is found," and that strong man fell upon his knees and sobbed like a little child.

Hoping, yet dreading he knew not what, he feared to tell his wife what had happened until his hopes were confirmed. Five minutes later, a man on horseback was dashing down the road at the greatest speed while a dog kept pace with him. Following Bruno's guidance he halted at the — Hotel. He heard a sweet childish voice calling, "Papa! papa! here I am!" and looking up saw his long-lost darling, without stretched arms at the window.

"Coming, my son! Coming!" and dismounting, he demanded to be shown to his boy at once.

We can easily imagine the scene that ensued. But what joy could equal that of the bereaved mother, when her darling was restored to her arms? We can guess how Arthur was petted and kissed, and made to tell his story over and over again—but Bruno came in for his share of caresses, and seemed as much delighted as any of them.

"Papa, there is one thing that I would like you to do," said Arthur at dinner.

"Anything and everything," said Mr.

Graves, beaming at him from the other side of the table.

"Have my Miss Jennie come here to live with us, for she is so good."

"She shall be my housekeeper," said Mr. Graves, promptly, "if she will accept the situation."

"And something else I want, papa—"

"Well, my boy, what is it?"

"Don't do anything to injure the manager, papa—for, after all, he was very kind to me."

"For your sake, my boy, then, I consent," replied his father.

Mr. Graves drove down to the hotel and brought "my Miss Jennie" home that very night, and a happier party were never col-

lected together. Bruno was the only dissatisfied member, for when he wanted to take a quiet nap by the fire, the children would kiss him, and try to stuff him with cake and sweetmeats.

Let us glance at the picture one year later. Mr. and Mrs. Graves are seated on the porch—she sewing and he reading aloud. Grace and "Miss Jennie" are binding flowers into bouquets. The children are playing merrily on the lawn, Arthur is swinging gently to and fro, while Bruno is lazily basking in the sunshine, with his nose between his paws, gazing lovingly at his little master.

"Make but a dog your friend, and he'll never desert you."

AULD ROBIN GRAY.

BY ELIZABETH BIGELOW.

"MARIA, your girls really ought to get married."

We heard Aunt Caleb say that, as she was going out of the hall door. That was usually the end of Aunt Caleb's conferences with mother. How many times, in the last ten years, she had advanced that proposition as the solution of all our difficulties is known only to the recording angel.

We took it with rather less show of indignation, now, than we used to;—"we are the girls," you understand; as Wordsworth's porridge-eating little maid pathetically remarks, "we are free."

Olive's cheek flushed a little. That was the only way our "rare pale" Olive ever showed when she was moved. Marie set the sewing-machine to racing like mad, and hemmed her flounce wrong side out.

"She's at it again," was all that Gatty said. Gatty was sitting, with her chin in her hand, gazing meditatively into the fire; for a wonder, for meditation was not much in Gatty's line.

Kate tossed her little retroussé nose in the air.

"I'd rather be the horriddest old maid that ever was than marry a little, wheezy, stinky, withered-up old thing like Cousin Laura's husband!"

"Kate, Kate!" said mother, holding up a reproving finger as she came in.

"But then he's awfully rich," said Gatty, with a sigh.

We all looked at Gatty; that speech and that sigh were so unlike her. For she was not practical; she was "clear Sloccomb," as Aunt Caleb said, and "understood the value of money and position no more than a babe."

"It's gone!" said mother, with auctioneer-like brevity, dropping into her armchair.

"What is gone?" we exclaimed, in chorus.

"Everything. The Pennycatchet Bank has failed."

This was harder to bear than even Aunt Caleb.

"Well, it wasn't much, after all," said Kate, philosophically, after a moment of utter silence.

"Much! it was our all!" said mother; and we saw the tears stealing through the fingers with which she had covered her face. Our brave little mother, whose heart had never once failed before in all the struggles of the last ten years!

And they had been hard struggles, too. For we had not "come down in the world" all at once, with that shock that leaves room for neither hopes nor fears; our purse and position had been growing "small by degrees and beautifully less," with every year. Father was a lawyer, who cared

much more about getting his cases than his fees; according to Aunt Caleb, there never was a Slocomb who had "an eye to the main chance." When he died he left us a fine house, in an aristocratic quarter of the city; only that and nothing more. The house couldn't support us, and, consequently, as Kate said, we couldn't support the house. We had moved three times in trying to find a house that we *could* support. It was just after the second move, four years after father's death, that Olive announced her intention of "earning her own living." It may seem strange, but, though we had had a sore struggle to make both ends meet, that was a possibility that had never occurred to any of us before. We had not quite given up or been forsaken by "our set." Aunt Caleb "kept our heads above water," as she expressed it. We had eaten humble pie to the extent of fixing up party gear for ourselves out of Aunt Caleb and Cousin Laura's cast-off gowns, but we had not thought of stooping to earn our own gowns. Olive's announcement fell among us like a bombshell. Mother looked as if she were going to faint, and we were all speechless, except Kate. Kate was only fourteen, then, and she was, if possible, a little more of a madcap than she is now. I don't dare to tell you what Kate said, lest our proper Aunt Caleb should by some means hear of it; we have still the fear of Aunt Caleb before our eyes. But this much I will set down, and you are welcome to any inferences you can draw from it. Kate's great comrade and ally at that time was a youngster in the next house whose favorite exclamation was "Bully for you!"

Gatty was the next speaker.

"You, Olive? Why, it would look like Cleopatra taking in washing! Any one of us would look better earning our own living than you!"

"O dear! What would your poor father say?" said mother.

"What will Aunt Caleb say?" said I.

"What will you do, Olive?" said Marie. Marie was the practical one.

"Teach, of course," replied our Cleopatra. "What else is there for impoverished gentility without talent of any kind?"

And so it came to pass that Miss Slocomb, the beauty of the family, made herself agreeable to a committee-man who had known her father, and obtained a situation in a public school—and ruined her matri-

monial prospects, according to Aunt Caleb. But they were ruined before, we all thought; Olive had been engaged to a poor law student, who had died—considerately, Aunt Caleb thought—and we all believed her to be one of the few "faithful souls." And time was proving us in the right. Olive was twenty-eight, now, and though she had had, in spite of her school-teaching, two or three lovers, pronounced "eligible" by Aunt Caleb, she was still faithful to Jack Morison's memory.

Of course Olive's example in working for a living was the little leaven that leavened the whole lump. Gatty and Kate were still in school, but Marie turned her chief accomplishments, drawing and painting, to account, finding quite a remunerative sale for her wares at two or three down-town picture stores; and I found some music scholars among the friends of our prosperous days. But still we were far from making our fortunes; the proverbial wolf still prowled around our dwelling, if he did not actually sit at the door.

And all the time Aunt Caleb was croaking matrimony at us, as lugubriously as Poe's raven croaked "nevermore." Of course we had had "opportunities," being passably good-looking young women—Gatty had grown up a beauty like Olive—and being persistently dragged into society by Aunt Caleb; but in spite of the warnings of our respected relative, sentiment still held a higher place in our regard than settlements, and we were Gills whose Jacks were long in appearing. All but Gatty; Gatty's Jack had appeared—and *di* appeared. "He wooed and rode away," like the noble lord in the song. But our Gatty was not the one to mourn; at least outwardly; whether she did "in the dead unhappy midnights," we could not tell; pride we knew would keep her eyes bright and her step light, however she might feel. She might have "gotten a hurt" that would not heal in a lifetime, and none of us been the wiser. But I didn't believe she had, for I did not see how a man like Will Farrington could touch a heart like Gatty's.

He was a handsome young man; of four or five-and-twenty, and had been a great favorite in society; and Gatty had been flattered by his attentions; that was the way it began. All the young ladies smiled upon him, but all the maumas turned the cold shoulder upon him. For though he be-

longed to a fine old family, and had the entree of the "best society," he was poor; almost entirely dependent upon a rich uncle, who was reputed to be miserly, and was "hard upon a fellow," as Will expressed it. He and Gatty fell in love with each other and were engaged. Mother objected a little, at first, but it was of no use to object to anything that Gatty had set her heart upon; and Aunt Caleb's fiat went forth in favor of the lovers. It was something to have one of us married, at any rate; and then the rich old uncle might be brought to a better mind; he probably would, upon his deathbed, at least, and he had no kith or kin except Will, and they were young, and could afford to wait.

And so it was that the young couple were betrothed, with the blessing of everybody except the uncle, who wrote what Gatty denominated "a horridly hateful letter," advising Will to try taking care of himself before he attempted to take care of a wife, and inquiring, with the cynicism natural to miserly old age, "how long he expected it would last;" and Will, whose greatest exertions had hitherto been leading the German, and playing billiards and croquet, departed for Philadelphia, where the miserly uncle abode, and brought his aspiring soul down to the work of a clerk in a banking-house.

And Gatty sighed that Will should be brought down to such uncongenial labor, and hoped he wouldn't work too hard, and wished she had some wonderful gift that would earn a fortune for him, and counted the days that must pass before he could come to see her.

By-and-by we heard it rumored that Will was devoting himself to his old labors more assiduously than to his new ones. We heard of him as having his usual "success" in society. Gatty was glad that he could "have the heart to take a little recreation;" she was afraid he couldn't, when he was away from her. But when society absorbed so much of the young man's attention that his letters grew very short and infrequent, Gatty began to look a little troubled. Soon we heard that he was devoting himself to an heiress, who was making a great sensation in Philadelphia society by reason of her millions. I do not think that Gatty credited the rumors, at first, but when his letters ceased altogether, at the same time that we heard of his engagement

to the heiress, she was forced to believe him faithless.

Just at that time, to Gatty's astonishment, a letter came to her from Will's miserly old uncle. It merely asked, in a very courteous way, if she was engaged to his nephew. It was not at all blunt, as might have been expected from the miserly old bachelor, and yet one could not help gathering from it that its author was in a disturbed and angry frame of mind when he wrote it. And Gatty's tender heart was alarmed on Will's account. With the natural weakness of the sex, she decided that she was the cause of all Will's misfortunes; and what did the foolish little chit do but write the elderly uncle a long letter, beseeching him to "remember when he was young, and not be so hard upon Will!"

One letter brought forth another, and now for six months Gatty had been corresponding with Will Farrington's old uncle. She used to read us some of his letters, and they were very entertaining; not at all what one would expect from such a crusty old bachelor. And as for Gatty, she always writes the brightest, most piquant letters; we did not wonder at all that he liked to receive them. But it was so queer that we teased her a little, calling him Auld Robin Gray—which was the more appropriate as his name was Robert—and prophesying that she would yet mend the family fortunes by marrying him.

And I must confess that when mother told us the Pennycatcher Bank had failed, the first thing I thought of was Gatty and Auld Robin Gray. She was not the girl to marry for money for herself, but she had a great deal of the spirit of self-sacrifice; might she not be tempted to destroy her happiness for our sakes?

I feared that, and determined to make as little lamentation as possible over our new misfortunes.

"It only means going back to Aunt Caleb's old gowns, and a little more scrimping and pinching generally," said I, cheerfully, when mother announced that our "little all" was gone.

But mother was completely disheartened, and we all tried in vain to console her—all except Gatty, that is, she said not a word.

"It is no wonder she feels so, poor little mammy!—to have a dose of Aunt Caleb along with such a bitter pill as that!" said Kate.

"Lou," said Gatty, after we had gone up to our room that night, "Mr. Crossman—Auld Robin Gray, as you call him—has asked me to marry him."

"Marry him?" I gasped. "Why, you have never seen him—he has never seen you! Is the man crazy?"

"Well, no, he doesn't seem to be exactly that," said Gatty, with a little laugh that sounded very forced and hollow. "He says he has become very much interested in me, through my letters, and—and a photograph of me which he saw, and has a feeling for me which he never had for any other woman. He says he has a bit of romance still in his composition, in spite of his age."

"I should think so, indeed, and a bit of assurance, too," cried I. "Why should he think a young girl like you would want to marry a sour, crabbed, miserly old man like him?"

"But, Lou, I don't think he can be sour or crabbed—he writes such nice letters. And then there are a great many women who marry for money."

"The wretches! What right had he to suppose you were one of them?"

"Money is a very nice thing to have," said Gatty. "Just think—not to see mother look careworn any more, no more scrimping and pinching, no more Aunt Caleb!"

"I don't think money would annihilate Aunt Caleb, and—Agatha Slocomb, you do not mean to tell me that you have any idea of marrying that dreadful old man for his money?" said I, fiercely, looking straight into her eyes.

To my surprise, Gatty did not quail.

"You have such a dreadful way of putting things!" she said, a little pettishly. "You know I shall never care for anybody, and—and if I could make things pleasanter for mother and the rest of you—"

"Gatty, I will not hear you talk so! Do you think it would make things pleasanter for us to see you ruin all your chances of happiness?"

"I don't think my chances of happiness are so great, Lou—"

And with that Gatty broke down and sobbed; the first time I had known her to do so since the news of Will Farrington's engagement had come to us.

And I tucked her into bed, with an impatient kiss, and a heavy heart; for Gatty had a strong will, and I was afraid her mind

was made up. But there was something about it that I did not understand.

A fortnight after that Gatty told me that Mr. Crossman was coming to see her.

"I told him that I didn't think I could ever be his wife, but he insisted upon seeing me," she said.

I was very curious to see Auld Robin Gray; and my curiosity was destined to be gratified very soon. I was in the parlor when Bridget ushered him in. Gatty turned red, and then white, in a breath, though she had expected him. I could scarcely believe the evidence of my own senses. Could this be Auld Robin Gray—Will Farrington's miserly old uncle—this handsome elegant man of thirty-five, at most, with his frank winning smile, and easy graceful manner? Gatty did not seem so much surprised as I, but she was a good deal embarrassed. There was such a mystery about it that I felt perfectly bewildered.

Gatty recovered her equanimity very soon, and inquired about Will as calmly as if he were almost a stranger to her; but when Mr. Crossman replied that Will was coming on very soon to see her, she did look a little disturbed.

And I did not wonder. What right had Will Farrington to come to see her? I was conscious of feeling a great dislike for him, and a corresponding amount of liking for Auld Robin Gray.

I made an excuse, and left him alone with Gatty. Seeing him had changed my mind so much that I was willing to do anything in my power to further his suit.

"Gatty, did Mr. Crossman send you his photograph before he asked you to marry him?" I inquired, the first moment that I saw Gatty alone.

Gatty blushed beautifully.

"Of course he did," she said.

I wished that Will Farrington would stay away. Gatty was such a forgiving little soul.

But I did not get my wish. He made his appearance the day after his uncle's call.

I saw him before Gatty did, and he was the picture of penitence. If he had worn sackcloth and ashes, literally, he could not have looked more humble. And it was quite becoming to him. I felt sure that there was no hope for Auld Robin Gray.

"Don't see him, Gatty dear!" said I.

"He will make you believe there never was any hellish about it, and it was all the fault of the mails you got no letters from him!"

But of course my words had not the least effect—unless it was to make Gatty feel as if Will were abused, and make her more favorably inclined towards him.

He stayed for hours, and when he had gone Gatty appeared with the engagement ring which he had given her, and which she had sent back to him again upon her finger.

"So you have forgotten all your plans for mending the family fortunes!" said I, sarcastically, for I was provoked with her for forgiving Will Farrington so easily.

"Lou don't say anything to me. I am a wicked girl. I have been thinking all the time a great deal more about myself than about the rest of you!"

"All the time!" Did she mean when she was proposing to marry Auld Robin Gray?

So it came to pass that Mr. Crossman came but once more, and made a very short call, at that, and Will Farrington went back to Philadelphia, resolutely determined to eschew heiresses and all other workers of iniquity.

But Gatty was not happy; perhaps it was only the change in our circumstances which the failure of the Pennycatchet Bank had caused, for Gatty did take even less kindly than the rest of us to the turning of old gowns; but still I had a vague suspicion of some other cause.

The winter wore away, and Will's letters still came fast and thick enough to satisfy the most exacting fiancée; he was evidently attending closely to business, yet we still heard of him occasionally as being "in society."

One day, in the early spring, there came a report that the firm of Crossman & Co. had failed. It was a large banking-house. The failure was a disastrous one.

Following close upon the news came a letter from Will, which Gatty showed me long afterwards, and which I can therefore set down here verbatim.

"MY DEAREST GATTY,—It is all over with me, and I give you up. You never shall marry a penniless good-for-nothing dog like me. The old fellow has gone up, as you have probably heard, and all my expectations with him. I know you are such a dear romantic little soul, that you might be willing to try love in a cottage, but I could never endure to see you dragged down to a life of poverty. Fate is against us, my darling! Marry some better fellow, and forget your unworthy
WILL."

If that wasn't a specimen of coolness and selfishness, then I was not able to recognize those qualities!

Gatty simply told us, then, that Will had wished her to release him from his engagement, and she had done so.

It was very soon afterwards that Bridget ushered Mr. Crossman into the parlor again. I do not know how he happened to come. I think some "sweet little cherub that sits up aloft" must have given him a sign. I am sure our Gatty was too proud to do such a thing.

And Auld Robin Gray was not so much afraid of love in a cottage for his "darling" as Will Farrington had been. For he asked her again, to marry him, "with every bit as much confidence as when he was rich," Gatty confessed.

"And it was for the sake of your family that you said yes, I suppose," said I.

"O Lou, don't be too hard upon me!" exclaimed Gatty. "I was trying to deceive myself, not you. I thought it was such a dreadful thing to be faithless to Will, even if he had forsaken me for some one else, and yet the first moment that I saw Mr. Crossman's picture I was afraid I cared for him! Wasn't it the strangest thing—when I am not at all romantic, you know, Lou."

"O, not at all!" interrupted I, with mild sarcasm. Gatty in her earnestness did not heed it.

"I thought if I could make it seem my duty to marry him it wouldn't seem so bad. But then Will came back to me, and the poor fellow was so sorry, and I thought perhaps the other was only a fancy that I should get over, and that I ought to love Will. But when he gave me up again—O Lou, I was so happy!"

Auld Robin Gray "pressed her sale" for an early wedding day, and as our bride's preparations were few and simple there was no need of delay.

The sun never shone on a bonnier or a happier bride.

Will Farrington was invited to the wedding, but he did not come.

Aunt Caleb's comment was, that, "after all her shilly-shallying, Gatty had managed to marry a man without a penny in the world, or any prospect of having one, and she supposed she was satisfied!" I should think one look at Gatty's face might have assured her that she was.

BITTERSWEET.

Bell, August

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BITTERSWEET.

BY AUGUST BELL.

AH, these indolent days! Very rare such have been in my life, and these are the boon of sickness. Now, in the slow, pleasant stages of convalescence, I rest, and gather strength for work yet to come. Sometimes reclining on my friendly bed, sometimes sunk in the depths of this pillowed arm-chair, left alone and quiet, I look at everything in the room over and over again in a dreamy way, half-imagining, half-remembering enough to keep strangely commin-

gled visions ever floating, floating through my brain.

The plain muslin curtain at my window is printed with leaf shadows, ash-color, that stir a little as the wind stirs, cast by the morning-glory vine outside with its leaves and flowers. I watch the shadows clear and distinct, that almost reproduce stem and fibre, and they continually bring back to me, like a graceful ghost haunting me, the memory of that night last summer

when the luxurious trumpet creepers that ran up the pillars lay pictured in the moonlight just so clear and distinct on the white walls and beneath our feet, as Mrs. Remer and I walked up and down, up and down, the long veranda.

It was the third evening that West Lorraine had called; every time we passed the parlor windows in our walk, I saw his handsome head outlined in the mirror, as he leaned back in the softest easy-chair, contented as a king.

How well Helen was singing that evening, with a passionate vibration in her voice, and all her songs were of love and romance. Jean stood beside her, patiently turning the leaves of the music sheets. Jean was Helen's foil, pale, and insignificant to look at, and quiet to a fault. Helen was like a Circassian beauty, languorous, glowing, dangerous.

These girls were my cousins, but in the third degree, and a generation younger. It was now two years since I had found a home and a refuge with them. Calm years they had been, strangely calm to me, who had heretofore known only the fires and storms of life. Sometimes I wondered if anything would ever wake these people up. But they went on just the same; Helen everywhere petted and caressed for her beauty, Jean grave, dreamy, and overlooked, and Mrs. Remer gradually effervescing life and vigor away in petty excitements which were exciting to none but herself.

So accustomed had I become to her trifles, that I was startled by her unwonted vigor when, after passing the parlor windows perhaps a dozen times in silence, she suddenly drew me aside to a sheltered corner, and whispered, vehemently:

"I shall put an end to this, Cousin Morton!"

"To what?" I asked, bewildered.

"To West Lorraine's visits. Do you see how interested Helen is growing? I never saw her take such pains to please before. I wrote to a city friend last Monday to ask about this man, and had my answer today, warning me against him. He is nothing but an adventurer, with all his grand ease and airs, a common portrait painter, who lives in his studio, and makes enough to keep him in wine and cigars. Think of that! And he wants a rich wife, they say. Why, Cousin Morton, I am frightened to death when I think of the attentions we have paid him as a friend of the Bogarts! as

if Dave Bogart had the least judgment in his choice of friends!"

"But maybe Helen don't care," I said, soothingly; "you know she is a little inclined to be coquettish. You remember young Leland a few months ago?"

"Oh, this is different!" said Mrs. Remer, anxiously. "I knew that affair with Leland meant nothing, a mere flirtation. But West Lorraine is another man; and Helen—but never mind, we will go into the parlor now, and you can see for yourself."

We went in. By this time West Lorraine had found his way to Helen's side, and was looking in her eyes as she sang. Was he magnetizing her, or she him? For the rich color swept up over her cheeks, and her great dark eyes grew luminous and tender. It was not a case like the affair with poor Charlie Leland; I confessed that at once. Mrs. Remer sat erect and stern on the sofa, and succeeded in making her presence felt as an inharmonious element, for the little group at the piano broke up, and a few minutes after West Lorraine took his leave with his usual grace.

"Go up-stairs to my room, Jean," said Mrs. Remer. "I have left a letter on my desk for you to copy."

She went, and then the storm broke upon Helen; a most unexpected attack, and the girl did not meet it with her accustomed sang-froid. Had she found her heart at last, now, when it could only bring her trouble? It made no difference to her, she declared, whether West Lorraine were rich or poor, a duke or a painter.

"At all events," she asserted, "he is the handsomest and the noblest gentleman that ever enters our doors!"

"At all events, he shall never enter them again!" retorted Mrs. Remer, decidedly; and the next morning a note was despatched to Dave Bogart, containing some unpleasant hints for him to impart to his friend.

But was it to end there? Had Mrs. Remer been just in time with her worldly wisdom? I thought of my own rebellious youth, and sighed and doubted. West Lorraine came to the house no more. Helen and Jean read and embroidered, practiced their music, and took exercise as usual, and Mrs. Remer looked peaceful. But I had never seen a stone thrown into a young life without raising a ripple, and by some intuitive sign I felt that Helen was on her guard, that she had a secret. Jean never once asked why

West Lorraine's visits were discontinued; perhaps her sister had taken her into her confidence; and, anyway, Jean was never a curious, prying girl.

West Lorraine had not left the place, I knew, for I saw him a week after driving out with the Bogarts, and the same afternoon, as I went to the post-office, I saw him again, but this time he was walking, and Helen with him!

"Ah, I was right!" I thought; "and now what is to be done?"

But how had Helen freed herself from Jean? for I knew they had gone from the house together. Was this their regular habit to so separate, that Helen might meet Lorraine?

I had several errands to do that afternoon in various stores, and it was nearly twilight when I set my face homeward. The shortest path was through a little strip of woods, that the town was keeping for a park, and as I entered it, I was sure I saw Jean some distance ahead of me. I was hurrying to overtake her, when I saw a man by her side, and it was—yes, it certainly was—West Lorraine, again. I dropped back, but kept my eyes on them. He was bending over her in earnest conversation, and when they parted at the edge of the wood, he put something in her hand, and hastened back, this time coming towards me.

"A message for Helen!" I said to myself, indignantly. "It is a shame for them to drag Jean into their schemes, and fill her innocent head with such ideas!"

By this time Lorraine had nearly reached me, and, with an unforeseen impulse, I stopped him. Was I not older, had I not had experience, might I not advise these reckless, young lovers?

"You are making a great deal of trouble for Helen, Mr. Lorraine," I said, with dignity. "Why do you act so clandestinely, if you really love her?"

He stared at me a moment in amazement, then recovering himself, said, with a light laugh:

"And how do you know that I do love her?"

"It would be your only excuse," I began, indignantly, but he interrupted me.

"Pardon me, Mrs. Morton," he said, "but there are other motive powers in the world besides love. Mine is revenge. When your friend Helen broke Charlie Leland's heart and ruined his life, I made a vow to

avenge my friend, and to make her bear at least a tithe of what he had to bear. Do you think I can call it a success? I am frank with you, because the play is played out, and I leave this town tonight."

"Does Helen know?" This was all I could utter.

"Ay, she knows!" he said, with a slight shrug of his shoulders, and then he was gone.

This interview had delayed me, so that when I reached home, I found the girls sitting quietly at the tea-table with their mother, and by some word Mrs. Remer let fall, I knew they must have returned together. This puzzled me.

But Helen puzzled me more. She did not look in the least disconsolate or heart-broken, but talked and sang and laughed that evening in her gayest manner.

"It was only a flirtation, after all," I thought, "and she has no more heart than ever before." So I tried to let the thing pass out of my mind, and did not tell Mrs. Remer or any one what West Lorraine had said to me in the woods.

But as weeks went by, the same feeling crept over me as before, that Helen had a secret. Gay as she was, there was still a difference; it was not the Helen of old. Yet she did not seem unhappy, even in her most quiet moments. However, West Lorraine was not in the town, and one need not be every instant guarding against him, so I still said nothing to any one, though sometimes I was tempted to try to find out how much Jean knew of her sister's affairs, for Jean slept with me. But when I looked at her girlish head on the pillow I forbore; not by me should she be led into the clandestine by-ways of life. And she never herself seemed inclined to talk on such subjects; if she had any thoughts about love and romance, her brooding, gray eyes never betrayed the secrets of her heart.

There came a day at last when Helen fairly dazzled me, she was so glowing and radiant. The girl had been growing more and more beautiful every day, without our hardly realizing it; but on this special occasion, I, for one, was fairly startled by her loveliness, as she came into the room to say good-by to us, for she was to spend the afternoon and evening with a friend. Her dress set off face and figure to the utmost advantage, and she looked stately as a queen, poor child!

It was perhaps three hours after she went, that Mrs. Remer suddenly wanted to match some color on the afghan she was knitting, and remembered a bag of wools which Helen had somewhere in her room. So she went up-stairs to find it, and was gone till I began to wonder what could be keeping her so long. Then it seemed to me that I heard her calling me, and I hastened to the door and up the stairs. I found her in Helen's room, white as death, and almost fainting, with an open note in her hand which she held out to me. I read these words:

"When you find this, dear mother, I shall have become West Lorraine's wife, and maybe then you will learn to think of him more kindly. I knew you would never consent without scolding me terribly, and I hate scolding, so have taken the shortest path away from it. You couldn't help it, mother dear, so never mind, and forgive your own
HELEN."

Mrs. Remer was very much overcome, and trembling in every limb, but she was quick to plan and act.

"She did not calculate on my finding this before tomorrow," she said; "it may not be too late to save her, even now. Cousin Morton, we must go after her at once."

She rang the bell herself, and ordered the carriage to be brought to the door. I was all in confusion, but got ready instantly to go with her as she bade me. Jean was out on some errand, and we did not wait for her return, but drove down to the town at once.

"First to the depot," said Mrs. Remer, and thither we went, and she sent me in to inquire whether Helen had been there. I spoke to the ticket-master in a careless way, that he might not suspect anything wrong, and he told me at once that Helen had bought a ticket for Westlake, and gone out on the afternoon train. I asked him when a train would go to Westlake next.

"Not till midnight. There is a seven-o'clock express, but that does not stop at this station."

I hurried back to Mrs. Remer. She consulted her watch; it was half-past five.

"We can take the express at Wilton at half-past seven," she said, with rapid decision; and hurrying me back into the carriage, she ordered the horses to be driven at their utmost speed.

"There is some one that looks like West Lorraine!" I exclaimed, as we whirled along,

for it really seemed to me that I saw him turning a corner; but before Mrs. Remer could look, he was out of sight, and I may have been mistaken, after all.

"I only wish it were he!" she sighed, sinking back against the cushions.

What a drive that was! the horses urged almost to a run, the dreary road, the damp, chilly night setting in! There were fifteen miles to be made before half-past seven, and no time to be lost. We did not talk much during that desperate drive, but I told Mrs. Remer at last of my meeting with West Lorraine in the woodland, and what he had said about young Leland.

"It was all to blind you, all to blind you!" she said, impatiently; "it was all agreed upon between him and Helen, no doubt. But I confess I don't see what necessity there was of mixing Jean up with their affairs."

"How worried Jean will be when she comes back and finds us gone off so mysteriously!" I said.

"Yes, I wish I had left some message to quiet her," said Mrs. Remer; "but Jean is very discreet; she will not set the servants gossiping and wondering. It is always Helen that gives me trouble."

On and on we sped as the cold, dreary evening settled dark around us. At last the Wilton lights gleamed out, and shortly after the weary horses stopped at the station. It was twenty-five minutes past seven; we were in good time, and presently the express gave its shriek-like whistle, and came in sight. We were ready to step aboard at once, and the carriage was to wait at Wilton hotel for our return, whenever that might be.

On the express train thundered, bearing us to Westlake. I felt tired, cold, and stunned; it all seemed like a wild dream, with Mrs. Remer's white, anxious face for a central point. We should reach Westlake by half-past eight, and then! How should we ever find Helen! We had not one clew farther.

But it was easy enough to find her, poor child! When the train stopped its little instant at Westlake, and we hurried out upon the platform into the night, and looked helplessly around, we saw the lights shining from the windows of the ladies' waiting-room, and Mrs. Remer put her face to a pane and peeped in. She caught my hand nervously, and I looked over her shoulder.

There, sitting so that only her profile reached us, still clad in her dainty, bright, afternoon costume, was Helen Remer, waiting, with an anxious, troubled expression on her pale, beautiful face. But why waiting, why alone? My mind had pictured such stormy scenes, that it was a startling relief to see her thus. The few passengers who came in on the express with us dispersed, and Helen was the sole occupant of the room. There would be a return train in fifteen minutes. Mrs. Remer walked resolutely into the waiting-room, and touched Helen on the shoulder; the girl looked up in a wild dismay, mingled with some wistfulness.

"Come home with us, Helen," said her mother.

"No, no, I am waiting for West," said Helen.

"My child, are you married?"

"No," said Helen, nervously. "West hasn't come yet. I am waiting for him."

"And have waited here five hours!" exclaimed Mrs. Remer. "He has deceived you; he is in our own town lounging around the streets this minute. Cousin Morton, he told you the truth; this is his revenge!"

"What revenge?" asked Helen, in a sort of amazed terror.

Her mother told her then, unsparingly, all she had heard from me, all about young Leland and his friend's unscrupulous resolve. Helen heard it through in stony wretchedness.

"Then he never loved me, after all," she said, piteously.

"Never! never!" said Mrs. Remer, not sure whether she was telling the truth or not, but resolved, at all events, to get Helen home. "Hurry Helen, gather up your shawl," she continued; "it is just time for the down train. We can save you yet, and no one shall ever know what an *esclandre* you have escaped. We shall get home a little after midnight."

The hapless girl arose slowly and followed us out upon the platform, where we could watch the advancing cars. To the last, she looked longingly backward through the darkness, as if she might see West Lorraine dashing forward to claim her. But he did not come, and in a moment more the train stopped, we hastened aboard, and were seated, a strangely silent group, in the corner of the car, rushing back to Wilton.

It was ten o'clock when we reached there,

and as we got out to look for our carriage, we found the wind blowing heavily and black clouds all over the face of the sky. But Mrs. Remer hurried us along, without a word of shelter or rest, and we were speedily crowded into the carriage, and going with all speed homeward. By this time my head ached furiously, and I had sharp pains running through me, I felt so cold and tired, but I thought to myself that the others suffered more than I, for they had all the mental anguish. Presently the rain began to fall in torrents, and the carriage-top afforded small protection; still, we drove quickly on, though we knew we were getting drenched through and through.

At one o'clock we reached home, and Helen went straight to her room. Mrs. Remer stopped to smooth things over to the servants, who were waiting, and then asked if Miss Jean had gone to bed. No one had seen her, it seemed, since we left the house.

"Why, how strange!" cried poor Mrs. Remer. "She must have gone to bed, of course. Cousin Morton, let us go up to your room at once."

She clung to my arm as we went up the stairs, her strength seeming all at once to give way. What new calamity was preparing for her!

We reached my room, but there was no Jean there, no head on the pillow, no trace of her. Ah, yes! there was a note lying on her little table directed to her mother.

"A second time!" exclaimed poor Mrs. Remer, shrinking from touching the paper, and so I opened it and read it to her. Here was the real elopement at last. Jean had gone with West Lorraine! It was fairly incredible. Did he love her? when had he won her heart? when had she resolved to do this? And then I remembered that parting scene in the woods. Mrs. Remer remembered it, too.

"Oh, how blind I have been!" she cried, over and over. "As if Helen were the only possible victim! As if Jean had not grown to womanhood also!"

But it was all a mystery. We agreed that Helen should not know of it till morning. There was no possibility of pursuit in this case; the plan had been too well laid. While we were going to Westlake, they were speeding, fast as steam could carry them, in the other direction, and by this time were hundreds of miles away.

What happened next I do not know, ex-

cept that Mrs. Remer left me, and I crept wearily into bed, tired out, over-done, cold, shivering, and aching, from the unwonted exposure. They found me in a high fever the next day, and that was added to all the family troubles.

But they have been good and kind to me, their poor dependent cousin. I remember Helen sitting by me for hours, strangely gentle, and Mrs. Remer hovering noiselessly about. But I had no strength to speak to them, nor even to think about them.

But now I am almost well, and sit here in my arm-chair, remembering and recalling all the summer past, and the things that happened. Jean writes home happy letters, they tell me; she lives with her husband in his studio rooms, and people say he seems

strangely contented with his little, plain, affectionate wife. It was the last thing the world expected of West Lorraine. "But then, she will have money some day," say the sneerers, shrugging their shoulders.

Helen does not care now. Her heart arose indignantly from the shock and insult, and was caught in the rebound. At least I think so, as, looking from my window, I see her down in the garden, plucking late autumn flowers, and making a bright little bouquet for a stately gentleman who bends over her, watching every gesture.

Ah, well! the world is full of love, and sometimes the cup is bitter, and sometimes it is sweet. Well for us, if at least once, if even but for a brief moment, we can taste of the sweetness.

CAUGHT IN HER OWN NET.

BY ELIZABETH BIGELOW.

THEY were sauntering up and down the broad veranda of the Ocean House together—Miss Margaret Lomax and Mr. John Williams; she from a large Southern city, where she reigned a belle; he just from his father's farm in Vermont, and, a little earlier, from the classic shades of a New England college, where he was a tutor.

They had met a week before at this somewhat retired watering-place, where each had come for rest after the fatigue of their several pursuits, and had seemed to be at once attracted to each other—why, it would not be easy for a casual observer to see. He was lank, ill-dressed, uncouth; with nothing but expressive eyes and a magnificent brow to redeem him from positive ugliness. She, elegant, graceful, beautiful, a very queen among women.

Her aunt and chaperone, playing cribbage indefatigably with an ancient army officer, looked out of the window, and heaved a sigh of relief, that, for once in her life, Margaret wasn't in mischief; she couldn't wish to get up a flirtation with that awkward, grave

college tutor. Maud, her own daughter, was deep in a flirtation with a West Point cadet, but Maud was only eighteen, and could afford to amuse herself, if she wanted to; besides, Mrs. Lomax had made inquiries, and discovered that the West Pointer was "eligible;" so she could enjoy her cribbage with a clear conscience.

Mr. Williams was confiding to Miss Lomax the history of his early life: of his trials, and struggles, and triumphs; of his poverty, and his hard work to make his own way through college; of his parents' desire that he should be a minister; of the doubts and scruples and bronchitis that had prevented.

And Miss Lomax listened with such sweet and gracious interest, with such tender sympathy beaming from her dark eyes, that the tutor was entranced.

"I am burdening you too much with my affairs," he said, remembering himself, at last. "You are so kind that I cannot remember that my life is of no interest to you."

"It is of great interest to me! Pray go

on! I have so much sympathy for you," murmured Miss Lomax, lifting her lovely orbs for one instant to his face, and then dropping them suddenly to the ground.

"Thank you," said Mr. Williams, in a tone that was very full of feeling; and almost unconsciously he pressed the white hand, that rested lightly on his coat sleeve, nearer to his side. "But I have talked so much of myself, I think I have told you almost everything that I ever thought or felt—until I came here."

Miss Lomax was a little alarmed, there was such a depth of meaning in his tone as he uttered that clause.

"Dear me! The man will be proposing to me in a few minutes, at this rate," she said to herself.

"I think if you'll take me round to Aunt Laura now, Mr. Williams— She has a fancy that it is damp, and I promised her that I would not stay out long."

Mr. Williams led her around to the low window, without a word, and left her with only a low bow—a very awkward one, poor fellow, but the best he could do.

"Well, he is very easily repulsed—that is one good thing!" said Miss Lomax to herself.

But, as she seated herself in an armchair, in a distant corner of the hotel parlor, she looked as vexed and dissatisfied as if it were a very bad thing.

But she was mistaken. Mr. John Williams was not easily repulsed. He was not sufficiently accustomed to the ways of society to know that she had meant to repulse him.

A change had come over the spirit of his dream, just as Miss Lomax asked him to take her to her aunt, but it had not been caused by her words. Some chance had caused him to raise his hand to the breast pocket of his coat, and a letter that lay there unopened creaked and rustled, like a warning spirit. He had received it by yesterday's mail, and forgotten it.

He started like a guilty creature, when it forced itself on his memory; and that was the reason why he let Miss Lomax go without another word.

He felt that he had said quite enough to her, and it is safe to say that there wasn't a more unhappy man in that hotel than Mr. John Williams, as he wended his way upstairs to his room—not even the ancient army officer who detested cards, and had been a victim to Mrs. Lomax's insatiable

appetite for cribbage for three mortal hours. The tutor sat disconsolately down on his trunk, and opened the letter:

"MY DARLING JOHN:—I was feeling awful bad for fear you was sick or something when I got your last letter. It had been so long since you wrote, and it was such a little bit of a short letter, too. I was over to your mother's yesterday and she was afraid the shirts she sent didn't fit you you was always very particular she says. But if you had known that your own little Lucy stitched the wristbands and the fronts you would have liked them, wouldn't you. I am afraid your dyspepsia is worse and that you don't have such things as you ought to eat. When two people that I know of keep house you will get well, won't you. We are very busy getting ready for county conference. how I wish you could have stayed but if it agrees with you better then I ort to be willing Hezekiah Ramsdell has bought the Spotted Calf and we are making a grate deal of Butter there has been a grate fuss about Huldah Bryant's setting in the singing seats the others say she puts them all out but Huldah is dreadful set you know and she will stay. Luke Ramsdell will come home with me from evening meeting and sewing circle and everything I try to avoid him as you told me but I cant without hurting his Feelings you won't worry about it will you because I am engaged to you and I shall always love you best of Anybody I am having a new dress for the conference it is gray and awful sober looking I know you like sober colors because you didn't think my red delaine with the yellow spots was pretty and I suppose if I am going to be a tutors wife I ought to dress sober I am awful afraid I shant know how to behave but you will show me Hetty Johnson is married to that rich Mr. Carlton over in Lenox she had three silk dresses Moses Phillips is home from College and is going a Missionary to india he spoke in meeting last Sunday night the cherries are ripe but the birds are eating them all up I have bought me a white muslin dress of a pedlar you know you said you wanted me to be Married in white and I am going to make it all myself and I shall be thinking of you every stitch do write me a Nice long letter and say if the shirts were all right and if you didn't think they were stitched Beautifully your own little LUCY."

"p. s. I know you can't find any fault with this letter for I have taken grate pains with the Spelling and the stops as you asked me
your lovingest
LUCY."

Mr. John Williams actually groaned as he folded this letter and returned it to his pocket.

He had passed a week in the society of Margaret Lomax, and scarcely a thought of "his own little Lucy" had crossed his mind. He was not conscious of driving thoughts of her from his mind, but he was conscious that the sight of a letter in her handwriting had caused him a pang, and that he had not wished to read it.

"But I touched it then just in time to save me from being a villain!" said he, aloud. "Villain!" replied the echoes of his attic chamber, and John Williams, who had an almost morbidly tender conscience, shuddered at the thought of his own depravity.

"She is a dear loving child, and she isn't to blame because I have outgrown her—or, rather, because I have grown old, and worldly, and hard, and her childish simplicity doesn't charm me as it did once!—and she shall never suffer for it; she shall never suspect it, if I can help it!"

"And when we are married I can educate her; her mind will expand in an atmosphere of culture, away from that narrow routine of country life—and I shall get over all this nonsense, and think of her as I used—as the pearl of women!" And he drew his hand impatiently across his forehead, as if by that means he could throw off all the "nonsense" that troubled him.

But it wouldn't do. A vision *would* rise before him of a gracious, queenly woman, a haughty head drooping sweetly before him, dark, tender eyes—Lucy's were very light blue, and short-sighted, and expressionless; a woman who could sympathize with his loftiest aspirations; who wouldn't yawn in his face if he quoted poetry or talked science to her; whose soul could never be centred on spotted calves or a dress to wear to the County Conference!

And the heroine of this rather mixed catalogue of virtues was Margaret Lomax. Before her image, her "most gracious vision," in his mind arose an image of his Lucy, and it must be acknowledged that Lucy was not a gainer by the contrast. She was short and roly-poly; she was more than dumpy,—she would have set Lord Byron

into fits; she had a little, babyish face, which would have been pretty but for a turn-up nose and a very thick sprinkling of freckles; and she was very bashful, and very awkward in manner.

Added to all this, she dressed in the dowdiest manner imaginable. And John Williams's untrained, masculine eyes could not see how much this latter fact had to do with her unprepossessing appearance. He considered the difference between her appearance and Margaret Lomax to be all in the natural woman, while the fact was that a skillful modiste would have transformed Lucy, in a very short time, into a being whom he would scarcely have recognized, and one infinitely better able to bear contrast with Margaret Lomax as far as looks are concerned. So much for that much-maligned goddess, Fashion!

Seven years before, when he was twenty-two, and she sixteen, John Williams had fallen in love with Lucy Allen. She sat in the singing-seats, in a white muslin dress, and sang a piping little treble, that seemed to him like an angel's voice. And he went to see her, and sat with her in the vine-wreathed porch, on moonlight nights, while the old folks were sleeping the sleep of the just, and watched the blushes come and go on her cheeks, under his tender glances, and held her plump little hand in his, and thought he should never long for heaven if he might but sit on a vine-wreathed porch with Lucy forever! Poor fellow! he had forgotten that wise old saying, familiar to his copy-book days—"Time changes all things."

The prospect of sitting on a vine-wreathed porch with Lucy forever by his side—Lucy babbling on incessantly of spotted calves, and butter, and the quarrels in the singing-seats, and red delaine dresses—seemed to him now to savor much less of heaven than of the other place!

"She isn't to blame, and she shall never know it! It is hard, but it is life, and I must bear it. I will be true to her whatever happens—and I will go away from here in the morning!"

This was a noble resolution. I wish I could record, as a faithful historian, that it was nobly kept.

He arose from troubled dreams the next morning, and packed his travelling-bag. He went down to breakfast, and saw Margaret Lomax, and came up-stairs and unpacked

it. You think that he acknowledged himself defeated, acknowledged that his passion was too strong for him. Not at all! He had found out that there was no danger! Miss Lomax was so cold, and dignified, so absolutely unapproachable! She had evidently chosen, for some reason which he did not understand, to break off their pleasant intercourse. He could stay there, and keep himself aloof from her, without the least danger of betraying himself. And, as far as his feelings were concerned, the mischief was done. He should not love her one whit the less if he were speeding away on the wings of the wind to Lucy—and misery!

Such reasoning is not uncommon even among the sterner and stronger sex.

Miss Lomax, for her part, had decided that matters had gone far enough. She did not want him to propose to her—he was so dreadfully in earnest, and she dreaded a scene. She had meant to flirt with him. She had flirted ever since she was out of the schoolroom, and she didn't think there was any harm in it; she didn't believe anything about the bitterness of men's hearts. And it was great fun to have found an entirely new specimen of a victim, as she had done. This awkward, bookish, sincere, earnest college tutor, with his almost childish ignorance of the ways of society, and his wonderful skill in making himself agreeable, in spite of it, was absolutely unlike any man she had ever met. But she rather dreaded the denouement! She couldn't be sure how he would bear being laughed at for his folly, and allowed to see that she was only playing a game for her own amusement.

She was very much afraid that all her coldness would not prevent him from declaring himself; but for once in her life Miss Lomax had reckoned without her host. If she was cold, Mr. Williams was icy. If she was indifferent, Mr. Williams ignored her utterly. Miss Lomax became interested. Such an experience was new to her. In short, "Meg grew sick as he grew well."

Of course, his ire melted somewhat under the sunshine of her smiles. It took them about three days to get back to the old footing: yet not quite the old footing. Miss Lomax was conscious of a difference. Mr. Williams had evidently placed a restraint upon himself. He gave her no more adoring glances, no more confidences. Miss Lomax was piqued; she tried her best with this poor, awkward countryman!—and failed!

But her aunt, looking on, decided that matters had gone far enough; people were beginning to talk. An odious New England woman, trying to marry off her five daughters, asked her if her niece was "engaged to Mr. Williams," and informed her that she had once boarded, for a summer, at his father's, in Vermont, and could assure her that he was a most respectable farmer!

A respectable farmer! It was enough to make the aristocratic bones of the deceased Lomaxes rise from their graves, in the sacred soil of Virginia, to think of it!

Mrs. Lomax started directly for the beach, where her niece and Mr. Williams were calmly seated on a huge rock, watching the sunset.

"Margaret, have you heard from Major De Hauteville lately?" demanded the matron, planting herself firmly between the gazers and the sunset.

"No—that is, I don't quite remember when. Why, aunty?" And Miss Lomax's cheek rivalled the western sky in flame.

"Because I was thinking that we really ought to be making arrangements for your trousseau. I dread a hurry so much!"

Miss Lomax was about to put in a disclaimer, when it suddenly occurred to her that she would like to see how Mr. Williams took the information.

He was still gazing intently at the sunset glories, or as much of them as were visible above Mrs. Lomax's portly figure, and did not seem to heed the conversation.

"Never mind about my trousseau, now, aunty. How can you be so worldly-minded in the face of this gorgeous sunset?"

But Mrs. Lomax was not alive to the beauties of nature. She cast a glance of severe reproach upon her insensible niece, and moved away.

Miss Lomax was more disturbed than she ever had been in her life. Mr. Williams could hear her marriage referred to without the slightest emotion; and she had flattered herself that he loved her!

She determined to "play her trump card,"—to make a last effort to move him. Perhaps he had not noticed her aunt's words.

"I haven't told you, with all my confidences, that I am to be married this fall!" she said, watching him narrowly.

"And I have been guilty of a like reserve," he replied, quietly. "My wedding is fixed for the 20th of September."

Miss Margaret Lomax did the only ridiculous thing she ever did in her life—she fainted utterly away.

Then the tutor's reserve and coolness disappeared. He chafed and kissed the white hands, he exhausted the supply of endearing names which the English language furnishes, and at last Miss Lomax opened her eyes under a rain of passionate kisses.

She sat up, and they looked at each other. Then she dropped her head comfortably upon his shoulder.

"It—it wasn't quite true—what I told you!" she stammered. "It was only a conditional engagement. I told him—Major De Hauteville—that if I didn't see anybody that I liked better, I would marry him; and Aunt Laura is determined that I shall marry him. But I never shall, now—never!"

Poor John Williams! He felt that the sufferings of the unfortunates described in *Fox's* cheerful *Book of Martyrs* were light compared with his.

Lucy's letter—unanswered—was lying, a dreadful reminder, in his coat pocket, just beneath his new love's graceful head.

"But I forgot!" she exclaimed, suddenly, starting up. "O, how could I forget! You said you were going to be married! And it was true, of course?"

"Yes, it was quite true. I ought to have gone away from here! I knew, at the first

moment I saw you, that I should love you! I have been wickedly, basely weak!" said poor John.

And then he gave her Lucy's letter to read, as the best explanation he could offer.

She gave it back to him, with her eyes full of tears.

"We must part. You will marry her, and forget me, and be happy, And I—I shall go my way alone!" she said, with a sob in her voice. And then she hurried away, and left him alone, in the gathering darkness.

He left the Ocean House the next morning, saying farewell to nobody.

A month afterwards he saw, in a New York paper, the names of Margaret Lomax and her aunt among the passengers for Liverpool.

The next summer he went to that quiet little seaside retreat as to a rendezvous; he felt sure that he should see her. And he was not mistaken.

"You are not married, Margaret?" were the first words he said to her.

"And you?—and Lucy?" she asked, with the brightest of blushes.

"Lucy is Mrs. Luke Ramsdell—and as happy as possible," he replied.

And that autumn Mrs. Lomax was obliged, to her great disgust, to give orders for the trousseau of a New England college tutor's bride.

DEBORAH DRAKE'S GHOST STORY.

Webster, H W

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DEBORAH DRAKE'S GHOST STORY.

BY H. W. WEBSTER.

"Do you believe in ghosts, Miss Drake?" asked Corporal Scott, looking up from the paper he was reading, as I passed by his bed, sundry phials in one hand and a teaspoon in the other.

"No," said I, hurrying on, and giving the corporal or his question hardly a glance, with either physical or mental eye. But that night, when I retired to that end of the barrack called Nurses' Quarters, Conscience sounded a blast in my ear, somewhat after this fashion:

"How dared you, Deborah Drake, to tell such a lie as you told Corporal Scott to-day?"

"But," began Common Sense and Will, both at once, "I cannot and will not believe any such antiquated nonsense."

"You know you do believe in immaterial presence and communications—(and what's the difference, pray?)—and that to their agencies you owe your present happiness

and immunity from cares that weighed you almost to the earth during your youth and early womanhood; and, in denying it, you are not only guilty of untruth, but of ingratitude also;" and forthwith Conscience began scourging me with that flail she carries about, wherewith to thresh repentance out of our sinful husks.

"O," cried I, fervently, "I believe!"

"Then," said Conscience, deliberately folding up her instrument of torture, "I let you off until you shall have had sufficient time to make public recantation; if not made by that time—" and she brandished her flail, as a significant conclusion of her sentence.

Here followeth my confession of faith:

I believe in immaterial influences. I believe that at times they are so powerful that not only the influence, but the agency, is perceptible to us. I believe there is, in almost every person's life, a time when he

has had some experience of what are generally termed "supernatural manifestations." What these "immaterial agencies" are, I am not going to undertake to explain; though I've no doubt I could do it, just as unsatisfactorily as everybody else does—disembodied spirits—clairvoyance—electricity—humbug.

Perhaps, however, you will listen a moment to a fanciful conjecture of mine. I have thought, sometimes, that in ourselves (made, we are told, in the image of the Infinite) we held unwittingly all knowledge, as water may hold in its crystal clasp, unseen, some high-colored element, and that study, labor, surrounding circumstances or peculiar physical condition, acting upon us, as a re-agent upon the solution threw down the precipitate that we call consciousness. The circumstances that made me acquainted with my ghostly visitors I cannot explain, without going somewhat into my personal history.

My father was a clergyman in the narrowest lane of the Narrow Church. He was born, educated and settled among the Green Mountains. There he married; there I was born, and there my mother died. Then, I know not whether by the silent teachings of the everlasting hills, or the influence an earthly love made spiritual, he found the lane too narrow for him to walk in, and so he had to seek another path. He moved to Massachusetts, and there, when I was about ten years old, he married again, and in process of time, a son, and then another daughter, were born to him.

Of course, our names were all taken from the Bible. I only wonder they did not baptize me Jochebed or Haggith, for of all methods of mortifying the flesh, patent among the Narrow-laners, that of thus scraping people under lingual graters always seemed to me must be the most effectual. However, as father grew more liberal in his ideas, his taste improved somewhat in regard to names, or else his conscience allowed him greater latitude in the selection. I think his first visible descent from grace was the softening and shortening of mine into the rather doubtful diminutive, Dora. My brother's name was not a remarkable improvement on mine, for he was called Eutychus. Eutychus Drake! Think of that! Doesn't it sound like a scientific name for some newly-discovered species of water-fowl?

My little sister bore the sweet name Miriam. When I was nearly seventeen, my stepmother died, and the care of two little children devolved upon me, in addition to the burden of sorrow I bore for the loss of one who had been a true friend to me. And all this among strangers; for my father had just been settled over a church in New Bedford. But father's sorrow was too great for him to bear—his voice grew weaker, his gaze more abstracted, and he leaned heavily on me, as we walked to church, till one morning I lifted up my little brother and sister to stroke his soft silver hair, and kiss his white face, through the open coffin-lid. Then a girl of eighteen, with two helpless little children, turned away to seek her fortune and theirs in the wide, wide world.

When the funeral expenses were paid, I took an inventory of my earthly possessions, of which the following is a nearly correct schedule:

One boy, aged 6	
" girl, " 3	
Health,	x
(x representing a very small quantity.)	
Hope & energy, y	
(representing an infinite quantity.)	
A lot of old furniture,	\$100.00
Cash,	17.00

I stored my furniture, carried my little ones to the Orphan's Home, where I paid two dollars per week for their board, and went to work in the factory. The fact contained in that last clause was a very bitter one to me then, for I had a horror of factory life. I had taught some; but it was mid-winter, and I could not obtain a situation before the summer schools commenced. In the meantime we could not starve. But this life of toil and exposure was not without advantage to me, for exercise and the open air had a magical effect on my health, and I grew strong, and a stranger to all aches and pains. Every Sunday was a joyful day for us all; for then I went to see my darlings, no matter how fearfully the wind blew from off the cove, whistling through the tall scaffolds of the salt-works, beating great dashes of spray in my face.

Down on Cape Cod is an Indian reservation, where the last remnants of the Marshpee tribe are gathered. There, amid the dreary stretch of sand and lonely pines, is a spot fair and fertile, like an oasis in the desert; a clear bright stream runs through

it, and here and there, climbing over hills covered

"By forests which have known no other change

For ages, than the budding and the fall
Of leaves,"

one may drop suddenly into a little valley, in whose deep bosom, securely cradled from the storms, lies a lovely lake. Here and there, perched in the most lonely and inaccessible places, as far from each other as possible, in little frame cottages, dwell the meek, sad-eyed descendants of the fierce Pocknets and Ataquins, who used to startle with their war-whoops the early settlers in the neighboring towns.

"What has this to do with my story?"

I went down there to teach their public school, for my board, and a certain number of dollars per week, and took my babies with me. There they were with me all the time—in school hours, on the little benches in front of me, and after school, in summer I played with them, or walked along the shore of "John's Pond," whose blue water, thickly set with lilies, looked like another firmament besprinkled with stars. In winter I "popped" corn, or initiated them into the mysteries of "cat's-cradle," and tucked them in their little bed under the roof, where the pattering of the rain seemed to constantly remind us of our indoor comfort, and then sat down to my sewing, with as complete a sense of contentment and happiness as ever falls to our earthly lot, I believe.

To be sure, I was often lonely, and sometimes my desire for reading took hold of me like an intolerable thirst; but some one, I never knew who, sent me *Harper's Magazine*, and when I could live no longer without sight of a white face, I walked over to see the free-hearted, jovial people at Wauquoit, a little fishing hamlet, three miles distant, where the waves from the open ocean broke over the harbor's sandy bar, with a murmur as mournful and musical as its own name.

I remained there about eighteen months, for I *could live there*. The leaders of Marshpee fashion are not arbitrary, and one can wear seven or seventeen patches on her dress, without losing caste; and the one dollar per week that remained, after the children's board was paid, made us quite comfortable as to calico and little shoes.

I was not unmindful of the many favors

and kind deeds we received from our dusky friends; yet an Indian settlement is not exactly the place where one would choose to bring up children, so I went back to New Bedford. I hired two rooms, in a pleasant house on Acushnet Heights, whose windows, looking to the south, gave us a view of the harbor—the shipping—the long bridge leading over to Fair Haven, and its white cottages shining through the trees. When the sun set, we could see the highlands on the Cape, lying purple in its light across Buzzard's Bay; and Miriam used to fall asleep counting the revolutions of Gay Head light, winking like a great eye in the distant horizon.

I taught music, gave lessons in fancy work; like Mr. Matthew Pocket, I "read with those who had lacked opportunities or neglected them, and refurbished divers others for special occasions," looked after the accounts of sailors' wives, and wrote letters for those who could not do it for themselves.

In every person's memory, I suppose there is a certain period of life that stands out in relief against the checkered background of his other days, to which he looks back tenderly, perhaps half regretfully, saying, "I was so happy then!" With one, it is childhood, with another, schooldays; with yet another, the springtime of love which quickened every pulse of my being. With me, those days of toil at New Bedford seem now the golden ones of *my* life. I find myself ever looking back as to the dearest picture in memory, to the long lonely walks up the county road, after an evening lesson, perhaps in storm and darkness, when I watched, growing nearer and nearer, the windows of our chamber, where the light, shining through petunias and heliotropes, showed little heads, with chubby hands on each side, shading away the light, that eager eyes might peep out into the gloom to find me.

Year after year went by, and my children grew up bright and healthy. Yute was in the high school, and Miriam attended the academy. We lived plainly, and I economized to the last cent in my own expenses, that I might dress them so that they should not feel inferior to their companions; and I was happy. To be sure, Yute played truant sometimes, broke the neighbors' windows playing ball, stoned their tabby-cats, tore his clothes, broke his slates and lost his

grammars—came home with his eyes blackened in some desperate schoolboy encounter, and ran himself in all manner of perils by fire and water; but he was generous and affectionate, industrious and ambitious, always thoughtful of me, and never refusing to take any part of what boys contemptuously call "woman's work," when he could lighten my burden. And though Miriam often tried me as only mothers, who have daughters anywhere from ten to fourteen can understand, she grew a helpful little housewife, and cheered me with her dally unfolding loveliness.

One night, when I came home, I found Yute looking quite grave, and, as I opened the closet door to hang away my shawl and bonnet, I saw on a shelf all his schoolbooks in a row.

"Why, Yute!" I exclaimed. "What are all your books at home for?"

He put his arms around me, pulled me down in a chair, and, drawing my head back, kissed my forehead, and said:

"It means, dear old sis, that I've left school."

"Left school! What for? O dear!" And visions of expulsion and public disgrace flashed before my eyes.

"I've taken a place in a store. Reason why? I've got too old to be a gentleman at large and you slaving about all the time for me; so you needn't shake your dear old head, and look so sorry. I'm going to earn something myself now."

"If I might be so bold, Mr. Eutyclus Drake, how much salary do you get?"

"Sixty dollars."

"Sixty dollars!" cried I, with mingled contempt and indignation. "What's sixty dollars, in comparison with your next year's schooling?"

"Sixty dollars is no small sum, when you have to earn it, Dora; and if I do nicely, I shall have double next year."

"Next year, too?"

"Yes, and every other year."

"But where is your education, and all your fine future gone?"

"Well, I know—I've thought it all over. Don't let's talk about it, Dora. I'd rather shovel on the railroad, than have you work so year after year—" And here his disappointment got the upper hand of his philosophy and his pride, and a great gulp behind me made me turn round, and I caught Mr. Eutyclus Drake, *Æt.* 14, crying like a baby.

However, I did not undertake to argue the matter with him, knowing by experience that he was as stubborn in his determination as any mule. I went to bed in no enviable state of mind, and lay awake half the night, planning to circumvent this new freak.

"Yute," said I, next morning, turning suddenly to him, as I was getting breakfast, knife in one hand, and loaf in the other, as if my forthcoming proposition were an immediate inspiration, "if I could get sixty dollars next year, without working for it, would you go to school?"

"If you could get Aladdin's lamp, sis, I'd go to school as long as you'd wish, and to college, beside."

"'A penny saved is a penny earned,' isn't it?" was my next highly original proposition.

"Why—yes—but—" And Yute looked at the furniture and the breakfast, at me, and then at a long darn on his jacket-sleeve, with most provoking significance.

"O, not so, you simpleton!" said I, half angrily; "but if we could save our rent and fuel—"

Yute pretended to read from the paper in his hand:

"Apartments to let. Inquire of Debbie Drake." "Wanted.—A powerful burning-glass, and an apparatus for concentrating moonbeams."
DEBBIE DRAKE."

"Now quit that nonsense, will you? for I'm in earnest. You know the old stone house on Pleasant Street, that has been vacant ever since we've lived here? One can have rent and fuel, if they will live there."

"That's splendid," said Miriam; "such a great yard and lots of big empty rooms to play in! Can't I have a party my birthday, Dora?"

"Regular old sepulchre," said Yute; "damp and mouldy, I'll bet—haunted, into the bargain, they say."

"Pshaw! Any house that stands vacant a year, always gets that name. They'd say Aunt Prudie Francis's henhouse was haunted, if there should be a twelve-months' hiatus in the cackling there."

"Can you get it?"

"Will you go to school this year, if I can?"

"Yes. But Dora, the next year will be just the same, and I shall feel just as bad to leave."

"I guess Providence will provide," said Miriam, decidedly, with a mouth half full of bread and butter.

One month later we were comfortably settled in the south wing of the old house. I ought to have premised that this same house belonged to the heirs of a famous old Captain Clymer, who used to sail out of New Bedford, in the latter part of the last century. His voyages were always successful, and in those days, when the captain's was the lion's share in the whaling profits, it was no wonder that he grew rich rapidly, adding ship to ship, and real estate to real estate, until he was called the wealthiest man in town. After his last voyage he built this house—a great granite pile of four stories, with long three-storied wings extending north and south. Here, among the wonders he had gathered from every land, he sat down to enjoy himself with his children and the guests with whom he filled his chambers. But one night the messenger, who, soon or late, comes to us all, came unexpectedly, and summoned him to appear before his Owner, to settle the account of his life-voyage. No will could be found, although his lawyer testified to making one, and two of his friends to witnessing it. The estate had never been settled, and the state of feeling between the heirs was as amicable as such a condition of affairs usually produces.

The house, with its curious furnishings, stood for years without a tenant, and one and another of its treasures had been picked away by the descendants, till only a few massive pieces of furniture, that it gave one the backache to look at, and the portraits of the old captain and his wife, painted on panels in the large drawing-room, were left to tell of former glory. Then, when the heirs would have compromised matters sufficiently to rent it, no one would hire, for it was said that ghostly pedestrians had walked up and down its range of rooms so long, that they claimed right of way, and would not be dislodged.

We established ourselves very comfortably in the south wing, and Yute and Miriam greatly enjoyed chasing each other through the empty rooms, and running among the dusty barrels and chests in the attic.

I may as well confess that I am something of a coward, though nobody believes it, because I am ashamed to show it, and because I have either self-control or curiosity enough, usually, to investigate whatever alarms me. The first few nights I slept in the Clymer house (if indeed I did sleep), I

lay like a great polype, with every tentacle extended to catch the slightest indication of a goblin invasion, nestled close to Miriam, and thanked my stars that I was not alone. But, as I heard none of the traditionary knockings, stampings, clanking of chains, or heart-rending groans, I soon gave up my vigils, and "lay me down in peace to sleep."

"Don't cry till you are out of the woods," says the old adage, wisely. Four weeks from the day we moved, I worked unusually hard, went to bed early, and quickly dropped asleep, sleeping so soundly that I did not even hear Miriam come to bed. Some time in the night I heard a faint wail, and, looking toward the foot of the bed, I saw, in the narrow slip of moonlight shining through a crack in the shutter, a little naked infant. When I first opened my eyes it was crying, but as soon as I became fully conscious of its presence it began to spring, tossing its little arms and smiling. As I looked at it closely, I saw that two faintly-defined hands supported it under its arms. It stretched out its hands to me, and retreated towards the door that led into the main part of the house. Then, as I did not follow, it began crying softly, then came back to the foot-board, there smiling and coaxing me to follow it, then retreating to the door, and weeping as before, when I would not. How many times this was repeated I cannot tell. Finally, Miriam turned, and threw her arms over me, muttering "Dora," and it vanished, nor did I see it again that night.

One grows brave in the sunshine, and the next day I reasoned the mystery away very satisfactorily to myself. I was tired; I had eaten a hearty supper—there was nothing strange in my having had dreams, from which Miriam's touch had wakened me. All this was very fine while the daylight lasted, but darkness brought a fear of its repetition. And sure enough, it was repeated that night, and many others, always after I had been asleep, so that in the morning I could not decide whether it was a dream or a dreadful reality, nor could I, though I tried several times, keep awake the night through.

We became accustomed to almost everything, and after several nights I ceased to feel any emotion save curiosity. Then one night I noticed that the hands supporting the child grew more distinct, so much so that I saw they were a man's hands, small and delicate, but with the large joints and

full veins that mark the hand masculine. The next night I could see the arms, to which shirt-sleeves clung as if wet, and from them rolled drops of water that shone like brilliants as they fell towards the floor. Night by night the figure grew out of the gloom, as I have seen photographs develop from a dark background, till a young man, all dripping with water, and with rockweed and kelp tangled in his hair and clothes, stood before me. He also fell back to the door, beckoning to me most earnestly. Finally, one night he spoke:

"O wot you come? It is all my fault. You are safe; only come."

But I still kept in bed, and by day kept my own counsel, and brought all the strength of my reason and will to bear against this strange phantasmagoria. But I grew pale and thin, and my head ached as though I were undergoing the torture of the iron crown.

Next came the old lady, whose portrait still hung in the parlor. She was weeping; and wringing her hands, and pointing to the babe, she said, continually:

"Once they were like that, and loved each other. O take pity on my distress, and come."

I crept closer to my little sister, feeling that her innocence was my only safeguard.

At last in stepped old Captain Clymer himself, in a "dread-naught" jacket, with a queer old tarpaulin on his head, and in his right hand he carried a marline-spike. He looked at me a moment, and, making an authoritative gesture toward the door with his left hand, said, sharply:

"Go aloft!"

And in and out he went, time after time, always with the same short order. Captain Clymer may have been the pink of politeness when in the flesh, but if so, his manners have sadly deteriorated since that last voyage of his across the Styx, for when he came the next night he shook his marline-spike at me, and said, in a tone gruff as a fierce nor'wester:

"Blast your figure-head! Why don't you obey orders?"

Now this roused at last a little temper in me, and I had no sooner arrived at that state of mind, the articulate interpretation of which is, "I wot," than the phantom smiled sardonically, and glided through the door opening into our sitting-room—a course neither he nor his companions had taken

before. A moment elapsed, and he returned, with the same wicked look on his face. A cold hand was laid on my shoulder. I turned, and there stood Yute in the moonlight, as pale as his white nightshirt, his eyeballs dilated to their widest capacity, and cold drops breaking out all over his face and hands.

"What is the matter?" I asked, though I knew only too well.

"I had such a terrible dream, Dora—and it don't hardly seem like a dream, either." And he trembled in every limb. "Let me lie down by you?"

I put my arms around him, and reassured him by saying that he had overtired himself skating, probably, or perhaps he had been sleeping in a position that affected his circulation; and he soon slept with his head on my arm, as calmly as Miriam on the other side. And, counting their full even respirations, I dropped asleep again, in spite of my dreadful experience. I woke with a start, and there stood the shadowy captain.

"Yes, it was I," he said, answering my unspoken query; "and that one will be next," pointing to Miriam, "if you don't come along," he said, winding up with an oath consigning my eyes to a place where it is said the thermometer never falls below zero. "I tell you you wot be hurt," he continued, after a pause.

A thought arose in my mind as to the consequences if I did not obey.

"You can't stay here, if you don't," said the shade, with an oath.

"Will it be any better if I make the attempt, I wonder?" was the next thought.

"Yes; I give you my word of honor as a ghost," was the answer, though I had not spoken a word, "that you shall hereafter sleep in peace if you will follow me."

I lay still, and thought of all the circumstances that held me, like a fly in a spider's web—how willful Yute was; how my health was failing; how poor we were, and how comfortable the sixty dollars thus gained made us—and perhaps, more than all, was an indefinable instinct, like an unrelenting fate, driving me to dare the worst—and I said, audibly:

"Yes."

"When?" said the shade

"To-morrow night."

Now "yes" is a very easy word to say, generally, but think of promising to follow a goblin through a lonely castle of a house,

in the weird hours of darkness, and you can imagine how every nerve and fibre in your mortal frame might quiver, and cold sweat trickle down your face and limbs, as it did on mine. My terror became so great that I lost my consciousness. When I came to myself I heard Miriam sobbing somewhere, and saw Yute bathing my head with ice-water, and turning up his face, with a questioning anguish in it, to the doctor, our next door neighbor. He was discoursing to the student at his elbow in an undertone, somewhat after this manner:

"Considerable cerebral disturbance. Phrenitis to be apprehended—over-exertion, mental and physical—pulse—well—say—ninety-eight—Conium—depletion, unless better symptoms within twenty-four hours," (To Yute)—"See that your sister's head is kept cool—bathe her feet in warm water, and apply mustard paste."

A kind neighbor came in, who comforted the children, and nursed me carefully, and though the band round my head seemed crushing in its clasp, I never lost sight of my surroundings, or the ordeal I was to pass through when the night came. I refused my neighbor's offer to watch with me, and telling Yute to roll the sofa into my room, so that he and Miriam might be together while I was away, I laid my head back on the pillow, and resigned myself to my fate.

"I am ready," said the captain.

"So am I; God help me!" I said, getting up, and mechanically putting on my slippers, wrapped a shawl about me, and went out after my guide.

The way grew light as we passed along, and, with an attention that would seem incompatible with the deadly fear that possessed me, I noticed each spot on the walls, and every crack and nailhead in the floor, while every breath I drew was a prayer. On we went, through the long hall, up the stairs, and turned.

"Another flight," said the captain, then gliding through the chambers, till he reached the extreme northern one.

"Push aside those fireboards," said he.

I did so, and saw a little door I had never discovered.

"Open that door."

I obeyed, and the light streamed in from behind us, and I saw a low unfinished loft, which proved to be that of the northern wing—the wings being one story less in

height than the house itself—and there were three planks laid from the door to the further end.

"Come!" said the ghost, getting down and crawling in on all fours, which was the only way of getting in.

When we had reached the wall, he said:

"Put your right hand under that side of the flooring and take out that box."

I took hold of it, and pulled with what little strength I had; my hand slipped, and I fell back against the sharp edge of a rafter. There was a whirling confusion, succeeded by utter darkness; then a sensation of pain, and a warm bath poured down over my face and hands, which I was not long in deciding was my own blood. I tried to creep back to the door, but it seemed an interminable distance, and I grew faint from loss of blood. I reached out and gathered a handful of the cobwebs I had noticed as we entered, and stanching its flow. The band around my head grew loose, and I sat patiently, resting, and waiting for the morning.

I think I dozed; for when I heard my name called, and lifted my face from my knees, I saw the light glimmering through the low door, and heard voices approaching, which I recognized as belonging to Yute and the doctor. I made haste to crawl out of my den, and was just emerging as they entered the chamber.

"Thank God!" ejaculated Yute, with a great sob of relief; and then he burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

I have no doubt that I presented a comical appearance, begrimed as I was with blood and dirt, my nightgown a moprag and my shawl a duster, my hair hanging over my eyes, and one slipper gone.

"Ah, doctor," cried I, "haven't I undergone depletion with a vengeance?"

I was really better; my headache was gone, and I only suffered from great prostration. That night, undisturbed by dreams or apparitions, I slept calmly as an infant. The cause of this blessed exemption I leave as a question for discussion between the medical faculty and the spiritualists.

The next day was Sunday, and Miriam went to church, while Yute remained with me.

"Yute," I said, when we were alone, "will you do a favor for me?"

"Yes, to be sure, if it's anything I can do."

"I want you to take the lantern, and go

to the further end of that place where I was, and put your hand under the right side of the floor, and get the box you will find there. You need not look so wild—I'm as sane as you are. See how cool my head is, and how calmly my pulse beats."

"But I don't believe there is any box there, sis."

"I don't know as there is, Yute; but I believe there is, and that it is very important to somebody; and if you will go, it will be a great satisfaction to me, if nothing more."

He consented to indulge me in what he thought a sick fancy, and soon returned, bringing the box. It was about eighteen inches in length, and ten in breadth, made from some very hard foreign wood, and had a sliding cover. Yute brushed off the dust, pulled out the reluctant lid, and rested the open box on the arm of my rocking-chair, while I examined its contents. First, there was a little morocco case of instruments—forceps, knives, scissors and hooks—nearly eaten away by rust, and on the inside was written "Henry Clymer." Then a something—wrapped in an old piece of linen that dropped to pieces as we attempted to unroll it, and that something within was a baby's skeleton, in an imperfect state. Then several bundles of letters, addressed to Captain Philip Clymer, and lastly, the long-missing will.

I told Yute the whole story, which he seemed to regard as fabulous, until I told him what he dreamed the night he was so much startled.

"Whew!" he exclaimed, with a prolonged whistle running through the whole gamut of astonishment. "I believe every word of Anne Ratcliffe's stories now—and Monk Lewis and the Castle of Otranto into the bargain. But how *did* you keep it to yourself so long, or dare to go after the terrible thing? There! I don't believe it! What are you going to do with it?"

"That is the most sensible thing you've said. I'm going to notify the heirs that it is found."

Monday I wrote to the lawyer who managed the estate, and he summoned the heirs. Two lived in New Bedford, and one in Taunton, and children of immediate heirs

who were dead, came from Boston and New York. They all met in my sitting-room, where I told them my story, and gave them the box. The alarm lest some dreadful deed had been thus concealed was quickly dispelled by the oldest living brother, who was a physician.

"Why, that is a case of dissecting instruments I lost when I was a student! Cousin Horace was a student with me, and we had that north chamber for our room, and one night we got a subject—this thing, I suppose. The next day we went down to Ponnagansett fishing, and Horace was drowned; and I never could find case or subject, which he had hidden, according to agreement, lest some of you children might get hold of it."

As may be imagined, I did not lack for either necessities or luxuries during my long convalescence, and when the weather grew warmer I enjoyed many a ride to the "Head of the River," and round the Point Road; and one night I was visited by a large "surprise party" of Clymers. There was much fun and feasting, and at the long table, improvised for the occasion in the drawing-room, I was still further "surprised" by receiving a formal speech from Doctor Clymer, as rambling and inappropriate as such speeches usually are; but the point of his discourse, and a very strong point it was, too, was the flourish whereby he deposited in my hands a little book, entitled "Deborah Drake in account with the New Bedford Institutions for Savings," which declared that institution to be my debtor to the amount of five thousand dollars. That was five years ago. Yute has been in college three years, and next July, when you read the commencement exercises of a certain university not far from Boston, you will probably find him masquerading in print (according to the time-honored custom of that institution) as Eutychus Anas. Miriam is at boarding-school in Norton.

As for me—I had been so long accustomed to having some one to take care of, that when my children went away, I could not be contented at home, so I came to Washington to find happiness—where I know it can only be found—in a life of constant toil and usefulness.